An Investigative Study on Factors Impacting Student Attitudes Towards Onsite Learning

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to examine factors affecting student attitudes towards onsite learning at the university level. This research employed quantitative method where discrete and continuous probabilities were used for hypothesis testing. The proposed model consisted of 6 independent variables, namely personal experience (x1), culture (x2), influence of others (x3), media motivation (x4), educational institutions and religion (x5) and student's emotional factors environment (x6). The data for this research came from 76 surveys of undergraduate students studying in six majors at a private university in Thailand. A 95 percent confidence interval was utilized and each variable was tested in simple regression and all were found statistically significant. However, when combined, empirical testing shows that only personal experience, motivation and environment are statistically significant. Each variable shows R square of 0.34, 0.34 and 0.12, respectively. The interactions among the three variables shows statistical significance for all pairs: x1x2, x1x3 and x2x3 with pV < 0.05. The outcomes also show that culture, influence of others and educational institutions and religion do not impact student's attitudes towards onsite learning. As a result, culture, influence of others and educational institutions and religion are advanced as factors to consider for interactions effect. The paper also proposes key points and policy guidelines that the government, universities in Thailand, the Ministry of Education and stakeholders can implement and consider to better understand student's attitudes towards onsite learning at the university level.

Keywords: Attitude, Culture, Education, Emotional Resource, Onsite Learning

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Introduction

The compulsory change to online learning in general since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled educational institutions, educators and stakeholders to pay more attention to student's readiness, perceptions and attitudes about online learning. There is limited information about student's attitude towards online learning as a result, the author researched what factors that determined attitude on online learning. As the pandemic conditions have improved, institutions have reverted to onsite learning. This paper is a study about what factors affect student attitudes towards onsite learning at the university level by focusing on six main factors and components of attitudes. The aim of this paper is to determine what factors impact a student's attitudes on onsite learning and compare the results of the research with the factors that affect students' attitude towards online learning. There are six main factors this paper examined personal experience, culture, influence of others, media motivation, educational institutions and religion and student's emotional factors environment. The purpose of this study is to determine which of these factors' students place emphasis on when faced with onsite learning as the learning medium in the classroom. Once these significant factors are identified, educators, universities and various stakeholders will be able to better understand how to successfully manage onsite learning that matches the needs of students. The more onsite learning is in line with these factors that determine student's attitudes towards onsite learning, the more successful the onsite learning experience will be. In addition, the anticipated contribution of this study is to provide more data and contemporary insight to the current literature in the field of student's attitude and perceptions towards onsite learning and give information that can be useful for stakeholders and policymakers in terms of arranging onsite learning.

Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the classroom learning environment by making it imperative for schools and universities everywhere to conduct classes and class instruction to be online (Aristovnik, Kerzic, Ravselj, Tomaevic, Umek, 2020). In Thailand, when the pandemic was critical, the Ministry of Education mandated that schools and universities conduct classes online. (Mala, 2020).

Numerous studies have been conducted on the advantages and benefits of online learning (Ter-Stepanian 2012, Greco 2009, Kee, Matthews, Perumalla 2009, Sifa, Lwoga, Sanga, 2007). Some these benefits include online learning offers flexibility, engaging tools to accelerate learning and personalization (Georgiou, 2018). Online learning offers students the convenience to determine when and where they learn (Henderikx, Kreijins, Munoz, Kalz, 2019, Joosten, Cusatis,.2020). Also, prospective students can access education through a single internet connection all at once through online learning (Paul, Jefferson, 2019). There are also the problems and issues with online learning (Pagram, Pagram 2006, Mclean, 2005, Almaiah, Al-Khasawneh, Althunibat 2020). Problems with online learning include lack of consultation with teachers and absence of physical contact of the learner with the instructor (Sintema, 2020). Some countries and universities have significant issues with a weak and unreliable internet connection and access to digital devices and equipment that hampers the online learning experience (Pokhrel, Chhetri, 2021). There are also the broader challenges associated with online learning including affordability, flexibility, accessibility and educational policy (Murgatrotd, 2020). Other findings that show online learning does not work include for example institutions lack or do not provide formal orientations to introduce online learning to students. Also, online learning does not work because students don’t pay attention when online or they don’t join online because they know or there is the hope that the online class will be recorded and they can view the video of the class later.

The pandemic also resulted in blended learning (known as hybrid learning) as the learning medium in the class, that combines traditional learning methods with information technology to yield the best outcomes possible (Rahim, 2019). Studies have been conducted on the effectiveness on blended learning (Kintu, Kagambe, 2017, Basquero, Escortell, 2022). For example, several studies have shown that blended learning has enabled students to achieve higher performance, increased satisfaction and improved retention (Kenney, Newcome, 2011, Garrison, Kanuka, 2004, Wongwuttiwat, Burapha deja, Tantontrakul, 2020) and its flexibility, as learners and educators can study together remotely in different locations at the same (Meyer, Wohlers, Marshall, 2014, Setyaningrum, 2018). There are however, problems with blended learning ranging from limited interaction with educators, peer engagement, group work and the ability to ask questions on technical issues (Mali, Lim, 2021) to its' success being dependent on the technological support given to educators as well as the technological know-how of educators (Bruggeman, Tondeur, Struyven, Pynoo, Garone,Vanslambrouck, 2021).

Studies have found onsite learning even during the COVID-19 pandemic still provides numerous incentives compared to online learning (Amin, Sinha, Dey 2021). Onsite instruction allows students to reflect on what they have learned, provides self-awareness and in-class-role play and activities with the instructor and other students in real time (Stuass, Koh, Collie 2018, Akcil, Bastas, 2021). The quality of onsite learning is greater than online learning, and students prefer onsite learning according in a study conducted by (Landrum, Bannister, Garza, Rhame 2020). A key benefit of onsite learning is the fact that it offers the physical face-to-face, human interaction between the student and instructor which reinforces the student-instructor and peer-to-peer connection. (Jaggars 2014).

This paper examines factors that influence student's attitude on learning. There are 6 main factors that impact an individual's attitude. The first factor is personal experience as a person's attitude is determined by his/her personal experiences. The second is culture. B.F. Skinner (in, Azwar, 2005) emphasized the influence of the environment (including culture) in shaping one's personality. The third factor is the influence of others, which is comprised of parents, family, teachers and other students (friends). The fourth factor is media motivation which shapes a person's attitude and motivation. Media includes technology and the social media, such as Facebook and Instagram etc. The fifth factor is educational institutions and religion such as university and Buddhism. The sixth factor consists of student's emotional factors environment. This last factor refers to a person's personality and general psychology. This study explores these 6 factors to see which one significantly impact student's attitudes towards onsite learning and also discuss their overall in influencing student onsite and online learning.

Data and Methodology

Data

The subjects in this study were undergraduate students studying onsite in several majors at a private university's international program in Thailand. The purpose for selecting students from different majors is to maintain objectivity and potential sampling bias. By so doing we could compare the data to see student's attitudes towards onsite learning. The students were 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students where 20% of the students were 4th year, 53% were 3rd year, 13% were 2nd year, 9% were 1st year students and 5% were others. The sample size was n=76, comprising students from six majors Marketing, Entrepreneurship, International Tourism and Hospitality Management, Business English, Digital Media and Design and Communication Strategy and Ideation. Of the 76 students surveyed, 31 were female and 45 were male. The make-up of the surveyed subjects was 26 Thai students and 50 non-Thai students as shown in Table 1. The scale used was (0, 1, 2, 3) where 0 = none, 1 = low, 2 = medium and 3 = high.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Gender	Male	Female
	31	45
Nationality	Thai	Non Thai
	26	50

The instrument implemented in this study was a scaled survey. The survey solicited quantitative, ordinal and nominal data. The rationale for gathering this array of data is to allow us the benefit of continuous and discrete probability analysis in hypothesis testing. The survey utilized in this study was divided into 6 sections. Section 1 focused on demographic information on the population survey, Section 2 focused on the student's attitudes towards online learning, Section 2 focused on personal experience, Section 3 focused on culture, Section 4 focused on media, Section 5 focused on educational institutions and religion and Section 6 focused on student's emotional factors environment.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to describe the data on the attitude measurement among students. The descriptive statistics used include: mean, variance, standard deviation. These descriptive statistics are used to described the observe data from the survey. Inferential statistics include expected mean (mu) and standard deviation (sigma); they are used as predictive value for purpose of making inference and hypothesis testing. We employed multi-variate to construct a model to explain student attitudes towards onsite learning; these multi-variate helps in constructing a model for the relationship among factors (Babbie, 2009) that influence student's attitude.

Methodology

This research paper proposes a model to measure student's attitudes towards onsite learning by focusing on 6 factors, personal experience, culture, influence of others, media, educational institutions and religion and student's emotional factors. This model was tested to answer the question of what factors impact student's attitudes towards onsite learning. The selection of the model for this paper was accomplished by examining the data distribution and the skewness. Probability distribution was used for significance test and the skewness was used to verify attitude trends towards onsite learning. Distribution helps in hypothesis testing, skewness analysis enables us to see adoption trend and attitude direction of onsite learning. The model for this paper consists of the dependent variable Y is defined as attitude towards onsite learning. The independent variables comprise X1 (Personal Experience), X2 (Culture), X3 (Influence of Others), X4 (Media Motivation), X5 (Educational Institutions and Religion) and X6 (Student's Emotional Factors Environment). This model is represented in Figure 1.

Proposed model

Y = a +b1x1 + b2x2 + b3x3 + b4x4 + b5x5 + b6x6

Variable Definition

Y = attitude towards onsite learning (Dependent Variable)

a = natural tendency without the influence of x

x1 to x6 are the factors listed in the literature (Independent Variables)

x1 = Personal Experience

x2 = Culture

x3 = Influence of Others

x4 = Media Motivation

x5 = Educational Institutions and Religion

x6 = Student's Emotional Factors Environment

Figure 1: Proposed Model

Findings and Discussion

For this research a 95 percent confidence interval was implemented as the standard for decision rule. Each of the variables, x1, x2, x3, x4, x5 and x6 was tested alone in simple regression and it turns out all are statistically significant producing error of less than 5%. After running tests on the 6 factors that affect student's attitudes towards onsite learning. It turns out that x1 experience, x4 motivation and x6 environment are statistically significant. The factors, x2 culture, x3 influence of others and x5 educational institutions and religion, failed as their t-value are 0.25, 0.67 and 0.34 respectively and hence not significant after running multiple regression on the six factors. The updated model comprises only the factors x1 experience, x4 motivation and x6 environment.

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression Modeling for One Independent Variables

V	(Y: x1)	(Y: x2)	(Y: x3)
Y	-	-	-
A	1.32	1.32	1.55
B	0.47	0.43	0.34
T	6.13	6.13	3.19
R^2	0.34	0.34	0.12
Adj R^2	0.34	0.34	0.12

V = Variable

In terms of interaction measure, the interaction of the three variables shows statistical significance for pairs x2x3 with p Value < 0.05, Pairs x1x2 and x1x3 do not show statistical significance with p Value > 0.05 as shown in table of Table 3.

Table 3: Interaction Effect among Independent Variables

V	(x1x2)	(x1x3)	(x2x3)	n	SE
Y	2.37	2.37	2.37	76.00	0.05
x1	-	-	-	76.00	0.07
x2	-	-	-	76.00	0.07
x3	-	-	-	76.00	0.95
b0	1.16	1.16	0.83		
b1	0.34	0.34	0.53		
b2	0.34	0.34	0.27		
b3	(1.31)	(1.31)	(0.88)		
bHat	0.53	0.53	0.74		
T value pValue	(0.07)	0.07	17.57		
	0.06%	0.11%	0.00%		

V= Variable

Skewness

The data has resulted in negative skew. Under skewness testing the three variables x1, x2 and x3 produced negative skew of 0.54, 0.90 and 0.90 respectively which results in negative skew according to Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution and Randomness Test (Skewness)

V	Skew	Kurtosis	Random*	N
Y	(0.50)	(0.24)	1.43	76.00
x1	(0.54)	(0.43)	1.79	76.00
x2	(0.90)	(0.24)	1.98	76.00
x3	(0.90)	(0.24)	1.98	76.00

V = Variable

*1.37 < L < 2.63

This is significant because this means that there are a great number of students who may be changing, embracing online learning more instead of traditional onsite learning in the new normal after COVID-19 pandemic. The new normal has made online learning an alternative option that students embrace through numerous benefits and advantages over onsite learning. As a result, the policy implications of this are that schools/universities must implement both onsite and online learning in the new normal to satisfy and placate the needs of students. The new reality is that not all students prefer onsite learning over online learning for various logistical reasons. The skewness here explains that from the research data there is a significant population of students that still retain the attitude towards online learning meaning they prefer to study online while another group of students prefer to study onsite. This negative skewness, in terms of attitude measurement, means we don't have a complete migration of student's attitude to go onsite and this is a challenge to the student and instructor. For example, if student's mind is not onsite and he/she wants to go online then this will create internal conflict for the student to choose how to learn. The students who don't want to be onsite are the people who drag the skewness of the research as they are mentally focused on online learning. As a result, there are students who prefer to study online and those who prefer to study onsite.

Compare Descriptive and Inferential Values

A key area of the results from this research is comparing the current observation or descriptive statistics with the expected or future values or inferential values. In this research study, the inferential stats in Table 5 is lower than the descriptive stats in Table 6.

Table 5: Inferential Statistics of Dependent and Independent Variables

V	μ	σ	n	SE
Y	2.30	0.46	76.00	0.05
x1	2.18	0.57	76.00	0.07
x2	2.20	0.64	76.00	0.07
x3	2.38	0.47	76.00	0.05

V= Variable

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Dependent and Independent Variables

V	Mean	STD	N	Median	Max	Min
Y	2.39	0.46	76	2.33	3.00	1.00
x1	2.29	0.58	76	2.33	3.00	0.67
x2	2.32	0.65	76	2.33	3.00	0.33
x3	2.32	0.65	76	2.33	3.00	0.33

V= Variable

The significance of this means that we can anticipate to see a lower attitude towards onsite learning. What are the implications for low inferential statistics? This means the predictive value is low which implies that from the research we have achieved probability of success of 73% as the popular attitude for onsite learning while the ideal target for probability success is 95% to achieve people's attitude to be onsite. The research returned a p Value of 0.27 when the target is 5%. As a result, the research is 22% short of achieving the attitude for full onsite learning. From the research data, in order to go fully back to onsite learning we have about 27 people who are dragging or mentally stuck with online learning.

Achievement

Onsite learning has achieved 1.55 on a scale of 0, 1,2, 3 in changing students' attitude to accept onsite learning. As a result, this represents 22% achievement in changing students' attitude for online learning. These are people who are lagging behind. The remaining 78% are people who still are strong and depend on the traditional classroom teaching so achievement is 78% for onsite learning. This is justified as the research has resulted in negative skew. In a sense skewness also is a measure of resistance or reluctance for online learning (22%). A key finding from this research that is relevant to students' attitudes towards onsite learning is environment. The environment in this study is defined as the physical environment which affects the student's ability to study which includes educational institutions, the physical classroom environment etc. It must be pointed that the educational institution and physical classroom in which the student is studying at all affect the mind, learning outcome and attitude of the student. For example, changes in the arrangement of tables and chairs in the classroom or the use of a blackboard instead of a visual projector affects the minds and senses of students which in turn can affect student's overall attitude.

The author's previous research into factors affecting students' attitude towards online research revealed three factors that were relevant, personal experience, other people considered (the people students interact with such as family, friends etc.) and educational institutions and religion. The common factor both studies share, regarding personal experience, reveals the fact that the student's attitude towards studying online or onsite is influenced by a student's own, personal experience. As a result, educational institutions and stakeholders in deciding to implement onsite or online studying must take into account the fact that student's personal experience is relevant to the success of the medium used to implement learning. For example, the instructor of the course can survey students prior to the start of course through interviews, surveys etc. to gauge not only the readiness, but the overall attitude of students towards either online and onsite learning and adapt the course learning, materials, teaching etc. accordingly for the required learning medium.

The limitations for this research study's methodology include the sample size limitation of 76 participants. The research mainly consisted of a questionnaire that students completed. However, no other data collection methods were used to gather qualitative data such as interviews. In addition, the research also exhibits selective bias as the subjects in the survey population were students at a private university's international program. The overall research may be more objective if information from students at another university were included in the survey population. The justification here is that the research findings with students from another university may be different from the results with just one university that was utilized in this research study. As a result, the research from students at another university may be a potential, future research endeavor that may be further explored.

Conclusion

From the results of the research, when the 6 factors are combined and work together, only personal experience, motivation and environment are relevant to establishing student’s attitudes towards onsite learning. The significance of this means that student’s attitudes impacted the experiences that students have personally experienced, the motivation of the student and the environment the student is exposed to. Personal experience in this research is defined as the student’s learning experience. Student subjects in this research have personally voiced their optimism and favorable stance with onsite learning because of the face-to-face interaction, being able to see the instructor, getting questions answered quickly etc. This is on par with the fact that personal experience is relevant to student’s attitude towards onsite learning according to results of this research study. Motivation has been established in the research as being significant to student’s feelings toward onsite learning. This makes sense because what makes onsite learning effective is the necessity for drawing students to come to the classroom. It must be noted that motivation has been described as the ‘engine’ of learning (Paris, Turner, 1994) and it can influence what, when, how students learn in this case and is a key factor in performance (Schunk, Usher, 2012).

How can organizations emphasize motivation and motivate students to embrace onsite learning is to take action early in the beginning of a course by giving an orientation to students before the learning in the course commences. The significance of an orientation is to build a strong relationship with students and to get know students early on so that the instructor can gauge the course teaching, activities, goals and establish good standards etc. to match the interests, skills and abilities of the students. Also, the orientation serves to prepare and condition the students to instill and retain the attitude of the importance of onsite learning. Students who come to the orientation on the first day know nothing about the choices between online and onsite. When students come to register at the university, they come to learn. However, if the educational institution offers students a choice to study online or onsite then this will create the seed for the attitude of refusing to study onsite when online learning is preferred by the student and is offered by the university.

It must be noted that the instructor is the spark and stimuli for motivation to take precedence in the classroom environment. If the instructor is very motivated and nurtures this consistently from the beginning, then his/her students will be motivated to come to class, learn and participate in general. For motivation to work students and teachers both have a responsibility to put in the efforts, but everything starts with the instructor. Student's attitude in learning is significantly influenced by the instructor's motivation.

Another way to mentally change student attitude from online learning to be onsite learning is to make online content and material unavailable online thereby forcing students to come to class onsite to learn and obtain knowledge and learning materials instead. The idea is that in order for a student to learn and gain knowledge and materials from the course, he/she must come to class onsite only. This action prior to the start of a course thereby reinforces the student's change in attitude from online learning to onsite learning.

By taking into account factors affecting student's attitudes towards onsite learning: personal experience; motivation; and environment, universities, educational institutions and various stakeholders will be able to provide policy guidelines and standards that will ensure the overall effectiveness of onsite learning for students in the classroom learning environment. More importantly, stakeholders will be able to tackle the present issue, according to results of this research study, of how to change the mind and attitude of students who are still mentally stuck and conditioned towards online learning to be the attitude and mindset of onsite learning. Universities have gone from onsite learning to online learning during COVID-19 and now back to onsite learning now that the pandemic and conditions have improved. However, the shift from one learning medium to another and back to the original affects people's attitudes which requires time to recover which may explain why there are students who are still of the mindset of preferring to study online even when educational institutions have now changed to onsite learning.

This research may have focused on a small sample population of students and what factors affect their attitude toward onsite learning, but the research gives some insight to what the populations of students at large in other institutions of higher learning may be experiencing. In addition, the research also targeted only one institution where the sample population is enrolled. As a result, this research topic warrants further research into the study of factors affecting students' attitude toward onsite learning, not just in Thailand, but in other countries as onsite learning is still the basic method of instruction that is used by most schools and universities.

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Research on Digital Transformation Strategy of A Fund Management Company

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Abstract

This research aimed to 1) study the environments and status of A Fund Management Company in terms of digital transformation, 2) conduct a SWOT analysis and digital transformation strategies of A Fund Management Company, and 3) propose guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company. The researchers employed qualitative research methods, including interviews with senior executives, employee surveys, document analysis, and expert evaluations of the established guidelines. The research findings revealed that A Fund Management Company recognized the importance of digital transformation and took steps to digitize its corporate strategy, business platform, office ecology, and customer trading system. However, the company faced challenges related to top-level design, system autonomy, process optimization, talent integration, and meeting diverse customer demands. The proposed strategy was digital optimization strategy, resilience and adaptation strategy, digital transformation advantage strategy, and agile resilience strategy. The researchers' provided guidelines for its implementation, experts evaluated the established guidelines to have high levels of consistency, suitability, feasibility, and usefulness.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Strategy Formulation, Digital Implementation

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Introduction

The digital economy became an essential driving force for global economic growth due to technology advancements and the fourth Industrial Revolution. According to the International Data Corporation (IDC) forecast, the digital economy's output accounted for 62% of the global GDP by 2023, leading the world into the digital economy era (Fitzgerald & Jimenez, 2021). The transformation of the global economy from an industrial economy to a digital economy was evident, and data became a vital factor of production. The integration of digital technology and traditional technology brought about significant technological changes. Additionally, digital productivity promoted the deepening reform of industrial organization logic and system.

The development of the digital economy was a strategic decision and critical support for China to accelerate the building of a new development pattern with the domestic cycle as the primary body and the domestic and international cycles mutually reinforcing. The "14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China" identified "Accelerating digital Development and Building a Digital China" as a separate action program for China's future economic growth (Li, 2022). The plan emphasized using digital transformation tools to change people's lifestyle, industrial production mode, and government governance mode. It also defined the strategic position of industrial digital transformation in creating new advantages of the digital economy in the top-level design. National and local governments increased the issuance of policies and opinions to promote industrial digital transformation and digital empowerment of all walks of life, providing new directions and paths for enterprise innovation development.

As digitalization has progressed, the financial industry has realized the benefits of improved employee efficiency, optimized customer experience, and innovative solutions. Business revenue increased by approximately 8-11%, and the cost structure was optimized by about 25-35% (Attaran et al., 2020). The digital model has made fund management more efficient and less expensive than the traditional model. The use of digital technology has lowered barriers to entry in the financial industry and changed the investing habits of fund clients. At the same time, artificial intelligence technology has also played a significant role in digital transformation. Organizations used AI tools to analyze data and predict the future to develop effective decision-making strategies. According to a survey by PricewaterhouseCoopers, about 86 percent of people believed AI was mainstream technology (McKendrick, 2021). Additionally, AI tools could help any company increase revenue. For example, they could identify areas of weakness and leverage accurate predictions of market trends, prospects, and competitors. When AI makes decisions, they are far superior to those made by humans and are free of bias or emotion. Moreover, according to Accenture, artificial intelligence (AI) could increase profitability across industries by an average of 38 percent by 2035 and is expected to generate an additional $14 trillion in revenue in the same year (Unkefer, 2023).

A Fund Management Co., LTD., was established in March 2013 as a fund management company in China. It focused on macroeconomic and local economic development, with a primary emphasis on fixed income investments. The company went through three phases of development, expanding its board of directors, establishing relationships with banks and brokerages, and accepting applications for public offering funds. Throughout its growth, A Fund consistently maintained solid performance, solidifying its position as a reputable and successful asset.

As digitalization has progressed, the financial industry has realized the benefits of improved employee efficiency, optimized customer experience, and innovative solutions. Business revenue increased by approximately 8-11%, and the cost structure was optimized by about 25-35% (Saarikko et al., 2020). The digital model has made fund management more efficient and less expensive than the traditional model. The use of digital technology has lowered barriers to entry in the financial industry and changed the investing habits of fund clients. Fintech companies and various services emerged, causing a quiet shift in the rules of the game. Digital transformation has become a new direction for fund management companies and economic development. As customers, channels, and competitors have all embraced digital platforms, fund management companies urgently needed to transform their traditional development models and shape a new type of financial service business model through digital transformation.

This transformation enhanced the efficiency of financial instruments, reduced operational risks, improved management levels, enhanced service quality, improved customer experience, and facilitated the construction and development of a multi-level capital market (Feyen et al, 2023). Therefore, companies in this industry had to undergo digital transformation. In this context, a research question arose: how could companies effectively implement digital transformation strategies to address these changes? The researchers conducted a study focusing on A Fund Management Co., LTD., examining the company's then-current state and digital transformation environment. They performed a SWOT analysis and formulated digital transformation strategies tailored to the needs of A Fund Management Company. These strategies served as guidelines for successfully implementing digital transformation, enabling the company to thrive, grow, and navigate digital changes and competition effectively in the future.

Research Objectives

1. To study the environments and status of A Fund Management Company in terms of digital transformation.

2. To conduct a SWOT analysis and digital transformation strategies of A Fund Management Company.

3. To propose guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework, as shown in Figure 1.

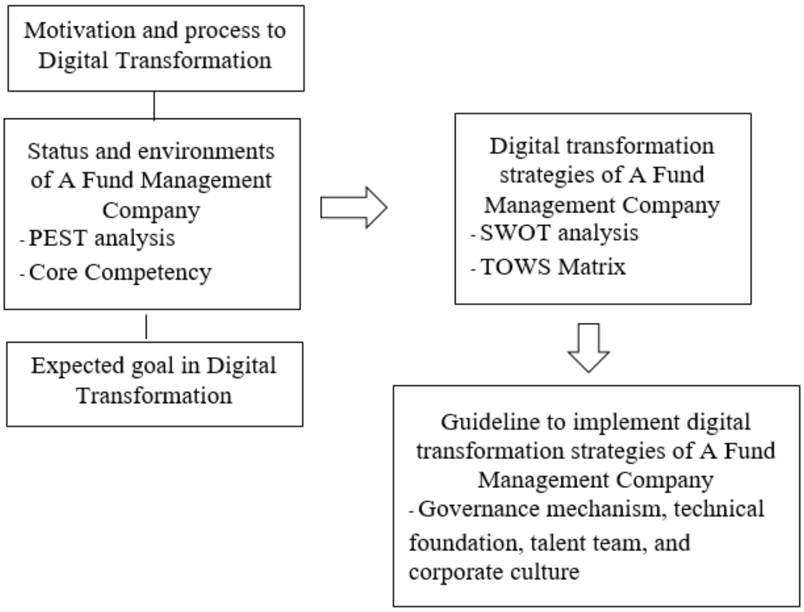

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

This research project started by understanding the motivation and process of digital transformation, and the expected goals in digital transformation. The project also involved studying the status and environments of Fund Management Companies regarding digital transformation, using PEST analysis to analyze external environmental factors and the core competency concept of business to analyze internal environmental factors. Then, a SWOT analysis was conducted on Fund Management Company to determine digital transformation strategies using the TOWS Matrix. Based on this analysis, the digital transformation strategies will conduct cover plans and actions taken by organizations to leverage digital technologies, data analytics, and other digital tools to fundamentally change their business operations, processes, and customer experiences, and guidelines were proposed to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company. The guidelines focus on optimizing the governance mechanism, building the digital capabilities, employee digital capabilities, and cultivating the digital culture.

Research Methodology

Process of conducting research

This research is divided into three steps as follows.

Step 1: The study focused on the environments and status of A Fund Management Company with regard to digital transformation. The theoretical framework used for analysis included PEST analysis and core competency. The researcher conducted a literature search on CNKI and Google Scholar, thoroughly reviewed and analyzed relevant literature on the digital transformation of fund companies. The findings were documented in reports, brochures, and other internet sources. Key informants for the interview consisted of 5 senior executives, and data for the field survey was collected through a questionnaire. The survey population comprised employees of A Fund Management Company, totaling 60 individuals. A sample size of 50 people, which constitutes 83.33 percent of the population, was selected using a simple random sampling method. This study aimed to achieve a comprehensive and objective understanding of the status and environments of a Fund Management Company, with a specific focus on digital transformation.

Step 2: Conducting a SWOT analysis and implementing digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company. The SWOT analysis was used to identify the company's internal strengths and weaknesses and assess whether these internal factors can effectively address both the positive (i.e., opportunities) and negative (i.e., threats) external factors related to the company's digital transformation. Subsequently, the TOWS Matrix was utilized to determine and showcase the chosen digital transformation strategy for A Fund Management Company. Finally, a digital transformation strategy was recommended for the company.

Step 3: Guidelines were proposed to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company. The analysis and summary of the objectives and basic principles of A Fund Management Company's digital transformation suggested the implementation of digital transformation by having 5 experts evaluate the consistency, suitability, feasibility, and usefulness of the established guidelines.

Data analysis

The induction approach was used for field research, where related theories concerning the digital transformation of fund companies were summarized, and the theoretical basis and practical guiding significance of this paper were determined. The field research method was used to understand the status and environments of A Fund Management Company in terms of digital transformation. Content analysis was conducted to analyze the data obtained through interviews and document studies. Additionally, data obtained through questionnaires were also analyzed reflecting variables related to digital transformation. These findings supported the data analysis obtained from interviews and document studies.

The SWOT analysis was combined to provide a realistic basis for the TOWS Matrix in choosing the digital transformation strategy. Transformation strategies were proposed from the perspectives of strategic management, in accordance with the objectives and principles of digital transformation. For the purpose of proposing guidelines for implementing digital transformation strategies, the researchers drafted the guidelines and had five experts in strategy and digital transformation evaluate their suitability, consistency, feasibility, and usefulness.

Finding

The environments and status of A Fund Management Company in terms of digital transformation.

The results for the environment for the digital transformation of A fund management company reveal that the political environment indicates strong policy support for the digital economy, particularly in China. The government has implemented plans to encourage the utilization of digital technologies in firms. Additionally, the government has established funds to assist companies in adopting digital technologies. Moreover, privileged policies and financial assistance are provided to firms that embrace digital technologies. Furthermore, the government's support for A Fund is substantial. In terms of the economic environment, the data analysis reveals that China's economy is experiencing a "new normal," characterized by shifting economic growth, structural adjustments, and the digestion of previous stimulus policies. GDP growth is declining, and there are emerging risks from excess capacity and high debt. The analysis of the economic environment concludes that the return on investment in the real economy has declined, posing challenges for enterprises to cover their capital costs. Additionally, it has been observed that capital market shocks and regulatory changes have influenced the securities industry.

The analysis of the social environment leads to the conclusion that digital penetration has experienced a significant increase, evident by a large number of internet users in China. This can be observed through the rising usage of mobile internet, Internet of Things, and industrial internet. Furthermore, customers are shifting away from traditional savings and embracing active asset management, thereby creating opportunities for the fund management business. Additionally, user habits are changing as they display a preference for digital consumption and online platforms to access fund services. The analysis of the technology environment reveals that China has a robust digital technology infrastructure, particularly in communication technology, cloud computing, big data, and artificial intelligence. China leads in patent applications, especially in the fields of 5G, blockchain, and artificial intelligence. The government has actively promoted cloud data services, with both domestic and foreign cloud providers operating in the country. The data also indicates a significant growth in enterprise software expenditure, highlighting the importance of digital transformation. The research findings show that A Fund Management Company is currently undergoing a process of digital transformation with the aim of enhancing efficiency, optimizing customer experience, and innovating solutions. The status and challenges of A Fund Management Company in terms of digital transformation can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Status and challenges of A Fund Management Company

Status	Challenges
Digitalization of corporate strategy	Incomplete top-level design
Digitalization of business platform	Lack of digital system autonomy
Digitalization of office ecology	Difficulties in process optimization and unification
Customer trading system	Integration of digital talents
	Difficulty in meeting diverse customer demands

Note: Summaries by the researcher

Regarding the digitalization of the corporate strategy, research findings indicate that A Fund Management Company recognizes the importance of digital transformation and has formulated a comprehensive plan for fintech development. This is evident from the data, which shows that senior executives have set the company's goal as "establishing itself as a leading intelligent fund within the industry by leveraging platforms such as big data, intelligent investment management, and integrated capital management." The management team has effectively communicated the digital concept to employees, providing strategic guidance for the digital transformation process. In terms of the digitalization of the business platform, the research findings reveal that A Fund Management Company has implemented various trading and management information systems, with a specific focus on platform construction, platform digitization, and digital mobility. The objective is to enhance data analysis, improve flexibility and intelligence, and provide convenient and efficient operational tools.

In addition, in terms of the digitalization of the office ecology, the research findings reveal that A Fund has implemented a honeycomb-based management system, which has established an office environment centered around digital technology. The construction of this system encompasses various activities, including environment development, service integration, and operation maintenance. The company has successfully achieved process optimization and digital transformation across different departments, resulting in enhanced operational efficiency and reduced risks.

In terms of office ecological automation, research findings indicate that A Fund has implemented automated processes for administrative management, fixed assets management, compliance management, marketing processes, and operational processes. This automation has significantly improved enterprise management efficiency, reduced costs, and enhanced employee experience. The company utilizes online office software and digital tools to streamline processes and enhance transparency. The final issue is the customer trading system. The research findings reveal that A Fund provides trading services to customers through client trading software, which simplifies user trading steps and enhances the user experience. The company aims to utilize digital technology to achieve exponential growth and fulfill customer demands.

A Fund Management Company faces several challenges in its digital development, including an incomplete top-level design. It has been found that the company lacks a forward-looking, systematic top-level design for digital transformation. The absence of a comprehensive plan hinders the integration and optimization of systems and business structures. Additionally, there is a lack of digital system autonomy as A Fund relies on external systems and lacks a personalized, independently developed business system. The technical architecture is bulky and lacks flexibility, making it challenging to meet customer needs promptly.

Apart from this, A Fund Management Company also faces difficulties in process optimization and unification. It has been found that process optimization requires cooperation and participation from various departments, but the lack of unified understanding and system integration makes it difficult to achieve efficient and unified operations. The company faces challenges in areas such as approval processes, customer management system analysis, and performance appraisal consistency. Additionally, the integration of digital talents is a concern for A Fund. The company lacks digital talents and transformation managers, which hampers its digitalization efforts. The demand for digital talent is growing in both technology and business departments, and the company needs professionals who understand digital systems and fund business operations. Lastly, A Fund struggles with difficulty in meeting diverse customer demands effectively through the utilization of digital technology. Despite having a large customer base, the company faces challenges in refining customer management, achieving customer incremental growth, and implementing accurate product marketing.

A Fund Management Company has recognized the importance of digital transformation and has taken steps towards digitizing its corporate strategy, business platform, office ecology, and customer trading system. However, the company faces challenges related to top-level design, system autonomy, process optimization, talent integration, and meeting diverse customer demands. Overcoming these challenges will be crucial for A Fund to achieve a holistic and seamless digital transformation.

SWOT analysis and digital transformation strategies of A Fund Management Company.

The results of the SWOT analysis reveal that A Fund Management Company has several strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which can be used to determine digital transformation strategies, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: SWOT analysis and digital transformation strategies of A Fund Management Company

	Strengths	Weakness
	S1 Comprehensive digitalization plan & effective communication and strategic direction S2 Established trading and management information systems S3 Honeycomb-based management system S4 Automation of office processes S5 Simplified customer trading system	W1 Incomplete top-level design W2 Lack of digital system autonomy W3 Difficulties in process optimization and unification W4 Insufficient integration of digital talents W5 Difficulty in meeting diverse customer demands
Opportunities	**SO Strategy**	**WO Strategy**
O1 Strong policy support for the digital economy in China O2 Increasing digital penetration and internet users in China O3 Shifting customer preferences towards active asset management O4 Government support for A Fund	Capitalize on the comprehensive digitalization plan and utilize the established trading and management information systems to leverage the strong policy support for the digital economy	Address weaknesses related to top-level design, process optimization, and talent integration to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the robust digital technology environment.
Treats	**ST Strategy**	**WT Strategy**
T1 Economic challenges in China's "new normal" phase T2 Impact of capital market shocks and regulatory changes T3 Increasing competition in the digital space T4 Technological advancements and digital transformation	Leverage the successful implementation of the honeycomb-based management system and established systems to mitigate the impact of declining GDP growth and capital market shocks.	Address weaknesses in process optimization, talent integration, and meeting diverse customer demands to mitigate potential threats.

Note: Summaries by the researcher

1. SO (Strengths-Opportunities) Strategy: Capitalize on the comprehensive digitalization plan and utilize the established trading and management information systems to leverage the strong policy support for the digital economy. This strategy will focus on maximizing the use of digital technologies and platforms to enhance customer experience, optimize operations, and take advantage of the increasing digital penetration and changing user habits. The researchers propose naming this strategy the "Digital Optimization Strategy."

2. ST (Strengths-Threats) Strategy: Leverage the successful implementation of the honeycomb-based management system and established systems to mitigate the impact of declining GDP growth and capital market shocks. This strategy focuses on utilizing data analysis capabilities, improving operational efficiency, and adapting to regulatory changes to mitigate risks associated with declining economic conditions and market volatility. The researchers propose naming this strategy the "Resilience and Adaptation Strategy."

3. WO (Weaknesses-Opportunities) Strategy: Address weaknesses related to top-level design, process optimization, and talent integration to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the robust digital technology environment. This strategy focuses on developing a comprehensive top-level design for digital transformation, investing in personalized digital systems, and enhancing talent acquisition and development to effectively respond to the opportunities presented by the digital environment. The researchers propose naming this strategy the "Digital Transformation Advantage Strategy."

4. WT (Weaknesses-Threats) Strategy: Address weaknesses in process optimization, talent integration, and meeting diverse customer demands to mitigate potential threats. This strategy focuses on streamlining processes across departments, investing in attracting and developing digital talents, and enhancing digital capabilities to effectively respond to market challenges and evolving customer needs. The researchers propose naming this strategy the "Agile Resilience Strategy."

Guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company.

The researchers have drafted guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies for a Fund Management Company. Afterward, experts evaluated the guidelines based on their consistency, suitability, feasibility, and usefulness, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies for A Fund Management Company

Guidelines to implement strategy	Consistency		Suitability		Feasibility		Usefulness		Priority Order of Strategies
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Digital Optimization Strategy	3.20	0.447	3.60	0.548	3.80	0.837	3.80	0.447	4
Resilience and Adaptation Strategy	4.00	1.000	4.00	1.000	3.60	1.140	4.20	0.447	2
Digital Transformation Advantage Strategy	4.20	0.837	4.00	0.707	3.80	0.447	3.40	0.548	3
Agile Resilience Strategy	3.60	0.548	4.40	0.548	4.20	0.837	3.80	0.837	1

Note: Summaries by the researcher

From Table 3, it can be observed that the guidelines to implement digital transformation strategies have high levels of consistency, suitability, feasibility, and usefulness in almost all aspects (with average values ranging from 3.60 to 4.20). The only exception is the SO Strategy, which shows a moderate level of consistency (with an average value of 3.20). When prioritizing strategies based on the average score of consistency, suitability, feasibility, and usefulness, it was found that the most important strategy is the agile resilience strategy, followed by the resilience and adaptation strategy, the digital transformation advantage strategy, and the digital optimization strategy in that order. The detailed content of the guideline is as follows.

1. Guidelines to implement digital optimization strategy

A Fund Management Company should begin by conducting thorough market research and customer analysis: Gain a deep understanding of your target customers' digital behavior, expectations, and pain points. Identify areas where digital solutions can address their needs and provide value-added services. Then, create a roadmap for digital transformation, aligning it with the company's strengths and opportunities. Define specific goals and milestones that support the overall strategy, such as improving customer engagement, streamlining operations, and leveraging digital platforms for growth. To be responsive to the strategy, A Fund Management Company should invest in designing and developing intuitive digital interfaces, such as mobile apps and online portals, to provide customers with easy access to their investment portfolios, real-time information, and personalized insights. Ensure these interfaces are user-friendly, secure, and compatible with various devices. Moreover, A Fund Management Company needs to leverage data analytics and artificial intelligence: Utilize advanced analytics and AI capabilities to gain valuable insights from customer data, investment trends, and market information. This enables personalized recommendations, efficient risk management, and data-driven decision-making.

2. Guidelines to implement resilience and adaptation strategy

To enhance decision-making processes within the organization, a fund management company can employ the honeycomb-based management system and its data analysis capabilities. The journey begins by investing in state-of-the-art tools for advanced data analytics, enabling collection, processing, and real-time analysis of immense financial and market data volumes. Moreover, it is crucial to establish strong frameworks for data governance to guarantee accuracy, integrity, and regulatory compliance. Afterward, the adoption of machine learning and artificial intelligence algorithms can assist in recognizing investment portfolio patterns, market trends, and potential risks caused by regulatory changes. Moreover, to secure the triumph of the approach, it is imperative for the investment management firm to offer instructional sessions and advancement possibilities for its staff members so that they can acquire expertise as data-literate experts who possess the prowess to proficiently harness data analysis tools while also deciphering valuable insights from data in order to facilitate strategic decision-making.

3. Guidelines to implement digital transformation advantage strategy

A Fund Management Company needs to develop a top-level design for digital transformation by starting with defining a clear vision and strategy for digital transformation that aligns with the company's objectives and takes advantage of the identified opportunities. They should create a roadmap outlining the key milestones, initiatives, and priorities for implementing the digital transformation strategy, ensuring that the top-level design addresses the weaknesses identified in the assessment phase. To achieve this strategy, A Fund Management Company must invest in personalized digital systems by implementing digital tools and platforms that enhance fund management processes, streamline operations, and improve decision-making. Technologies that should be considered for implementation include machine learning, artificial intelligence, and automation to optimize fund management activities and increase efficiency. A crucial aspect of achieving this strategy is to enhance talent acquisition and development. A Fund Management Company should assess the current skill set and capabilities of their workforce in relation to digital transformation. They should identify any talent gaps and develop a plan to acquire or upskill employees in areas related to digital technologies and processes. Key performance indicators (KPIs) should be used to track the progress of digital transformation initiatives, and regular monitoring and evaluation of the impact of digital transformation on fund management processes, efficiency, and client satisfaction should be conducted.

4. Guidelines to implement agile resilience strategy

A Fund Management Company should prioritize talent integration and development through facilitating knowledge sharing and skill development among employees. Tools for real-time document sharing, task tracking, and project management should be provided to enhance productivity. Furthermore, the company should implement an integrated digital collaboration platform with a primary emphasis on cross-departmental workflow optimization, enabling seamless collaboration and communication across different departments and streamlining processes to reduce inefficiencies. Improving the company's overall digital capabilities is the goal. This can be achieved by attracting and developing digital talents within the organization. Access to learning resources, online workshops, and virtual training programs are provided to achieve this. To align with the customer-centric dimension of the strategy, the Fund Management Company should adopt customer relationship management (CRM) tools. These tools will enable effective capture and analysis of customer data, allowing the company to better understand customer preferences and needs. Consequently, personalized investment strategies can be developed, leading to improved customer satisfaction. It is essential to integrate data analytics capabilities into the CRM system to provide actionable insights into market trends and investment opportunities.

Discussions

Based on the research findings presented, it can be discussed as follows:

1. The research findings have defined the "Digital Optimization Strategy," which emphasizes maximizing the use of digital technologies and platforms to enhance customer experience, optimize operations, and take advantage of the increasing digital penetration and changing user habits. From a strategic management perspective, it can be seen that this strategy aligns with the principles of leveraging internal strengths, exploiting external opportunities, and achieving competitive advantage, consistent with the works of Lumpkin et al. (2002). This reflects that by embracing digital technologies and platforms, fund management companies can position themselves as industry leaders, differentiate their services, and gain a competitive edge. However, implementing this strategy requires careful planning, effective change management, and continuous adaptation. Therefore, fund management companies need to invest in talent acquisition and development to ensure the organization possesses the necessary digital capabilities. Sebastian et al. (2017) further support that implementing such a strategy requires strong leadership, collaboration, and strategic partnerships to navigate the challenges and complexities associated with digital transformation.

2. The strategy, known as the "Resilience and Adaptation Strategy," provides valuable insights into the strategic management perspective of addressing weaknesses and mitigating threats. This strategy emphasizes the importance of leveraging internal strengths and established systems to overcome external challenges. A Fund Management Company needs to focus on data analysis capabilities to gain a competitive advantage by harnessing valuable insights from the vast amount of available data. This approach helps companies identify emerging threats, anticipate market trends, and make informed decisions. Additionally, it aids in identifying areas for improvement within the organization, leading to enhanced operational efficiency (Lin & Kenikasahmanworakhun, 2023). The research findings also highlight the necessity of emphasizing operational efficiency, which aligns with the strategic management perspective of optimizing internal processes to improve performance. By streamlining operations and eliminating inefficiencies, companies can reduce costs, improve productivity, and enhance overall resilience (Das et al., 2022). Therefore, this research demonstrates that these findings are particularly relevant in the

face of declining GDP growth and market volatility, where efficient operations help organizations navigate economic downturns and adapt to changing market conditions.

3. The "Digital Transformation Advantage Strategy," derived from the assessment of weaknesses and opportunities, emphasizes the significance of developing a comprehensive top-level design for digital transformation. This strategic approach is essential for aligning a company's digital initiatives with its overall objectives and strategies. It ensures a cohesive and integrated approach to digitalization, maximizing the advantages of streamlining processes and optimizing operations across departments. A Fund Management Company must invest in personalized digital systems by tailoring digital solutions to meet its specific needs. This enables the company to enhance efficiency, improve customer experiences, and make data-driven decisions. Such a customized approach helps companies stay ahead of the competition and adapt to the ever-evolving digital landscape (Kim, 2023). Furthermore, this research supports the importance of talent acquisition and development, aligning with the findings of Dorasamy (2021), which suggest that companies require employees with the appropriate skill sets to navigate the complex digital environment. By attracting and developing digital talents, organizations can establish a competitive advantage by effectively responding to market challenges and evolving customer demands.

4. The WT Strategy, or the Agile Resilience Strategy, reflects valuable insights and practical guidelines for organizations aiming to enhance their performance in a dynamic and competitive business environment. This strategy emphasizes weaknesses in process optimization, talent integration, and meeting customer demands. A Fund Management Company can take proactive measures to mitigate potential threats and position themselves for success. The researchers propose an emphasis on streamlining processes across departments, which highlights the significance of organizational efficiency and cross-functional collaboration. This aligns with the findings of Harika et al. (2021), who discovered that by eliminating redundancies and optimizing workflows, companies can reduce costs and improve overall productivity. This enables them to respond effectively to market challenges, such as changes in consumer preferences or emerging competitive threats.

The researchers have provided additional guidelines related to human resource management to ensure that the strategy is effectively implemented. Specifically, A Fund Management Company should recognize that attracting and developing digital talents is crucial for organizations seeking to thrive in the digital era. By supporting employees with expertise in digital technologies, companies can stay ahead of the curve and leverage these tools to drive innovation and growth. Therefore, this strategy must focus on talent integration, ensuring that employees from different areas can effectively collaborate and contribute to the organization's digital transformation efforts (Mumford, 2000).

Recommendations

This paper analyzes and studies the digital transformation of A fund management company by combining PEST analysis, core competency, SWOT analysis, TOWS matrix, and proposes the digital transformation strategy of A fund management company based on the actual situation. The following future research directions can be suggested:

1) Future studies may concentrate on enhancing the study's methodology. For instance, using measurement analysis methodologies to conduct a more thorough SWOT analysis would result in a more thorough assessment of the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In addition, increasing the sample size and utilizing different data gathering techniques outside the questionnaire approach may result in a dataset that is more thorough and representative for analysis.

2) The creation of a thorough implementation strategy for the suggested digital transformation strategy is a crucial subject for future research. In order to do this, the micro-operation logic would need to be examined, and a step-by-step plan for the company's digital transformation would need to be provided. By filling in this vacuum, researchers may present a more thorough and practical plan that takes into account the particular situation, available resources, and difficulties faced by A Fund Management Company.

3) Conducting long-term evaluations of the suggested digital transformation approach is a crucial component of future study. This would entail monitoring the implementation's progress and results over a prolonged period of time, evaluating the strategy's efficacy, and finding areas that could use more development or improvement. Long-term analyses would offer insightful information about the success factors, difficulties, and prospective changes required for the company to sustain its digital transformation.

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Exploring the Relationship between Employer Attractiveness and Job Application Intention of Millennials and Generation Z

Samita Mingkhwan[1] and Jul Thanasrivanitchai[2]

Abstract

In a dynamic business environment, organizations are actively seeking to attract talented employees, as they are a valuable resource for sustained business growth. The organization should actively focus on addressing challenge of attracting talented individuals and finding effective strategies to overcome the war for talents. In order to assist organizations in obtaining sustainable competitive advantages, this research has purpose explore the determinants that contribute to the employer attractiveness for potential millennial and Generation Z job applicants with regards to their intention in applying for a job. This study applied employer attractiveness (EmpAt) scale to inquire which aspects of employer attractiveness have an impact on individuals' intention to apply for a job. The employer attractiveness dimensions consist of interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value. The study adopted quantitative method and linear regression model to analyze data and a distribution of online questionnaires was conducted to collect samples through convenient sampling. Data analysis was performed on 400 respondents. According to research results, a statistically significant correlation exists between the various dimensions of employer attractiveness and individuals' job application intention. The study findings have helped to verify and advance the qualities of employer attractiveness and highlighted that

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economic value and development value have significant influence on job application intention of millennials and Generation Z living in Thailand. Also, suggestions were provided on how human resources department can enhance strategies and implement economic value and development value to attract millennials and Generation Z talents' intention to consider applying for a job.

Keywords: Employer Attractiveness, Intention to Apply for a Job, Millennials, Generation Z

Introduction

In a highly dynamic labor market, the demand for acquiring qualified employees is increasing, and organizations in diverse sectors encounter difficulties in locating appropriate individuals (Dassler, 2022). The organization realizes that the most important drivers for corporate success are talented employees and their skills (Maurya and Agarwal (2018). The development and enhancement of office spaces at large tech companies like Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Facebook, was not a mere coincidence. These companies intentionally aimed to create an appealing and attractive environment for their employees (Kelly, 2022). The fierce competition emerging from the scarcity of capable workforce makes it challenging for organizations to attract potential candidates (Ergun and Tatar, 2018). Acquiring talented employees is crucial for an organization to ensure its survival and attain a lasting competitive edge over rivals (Hadi and Ahmed, 2018). The competition for skilled employees has grown increasingly intense as the organization strives to establish themselves as employer of choice, in order to attract and retain highly talented individuals for long-term. With the intense competition among businesses, organizations are placing more emphasis on enhancing their recruitment and retention processes, recognizing that the growth and sustainability of their operations rely on the valuable contributions of their human resources. (Santiago, 2019). The human resources department is one of the primary sources and holds great potential for gaining an advantage, particularly when the individuals selected possess a high level of competence.

The capacity of the company to attract, hire, and retain highly proficient personnel from the labor market has emerged as an essential determinant of organizational success (Alnıaçık E and Alnıaçık Ü, 2012). Organizations strive for the dual objectives of attracting new employees and retaining existing ones, which will significantly grow the significance of employment advertising and branding. It is imperative for organizations to recognize and address the factors that contribute to employer attractiveness in order to achieve success in this attempt (Berthon et al., 2005). The strategic tool for being attractive organization to talents and being able to retain them with the organization has been developed from the employer brand in the same way organization positioning is a strategic tool for attracting potential customers (Chhabra and Sharma, 2014). Successful organizations understand the significance of having suitably qualified and skilled employees as valuable assets, appreciating and recognizing the contributions of these individuals. Berthon et al. (2005) defined employer attractiveness as the visualized benefits that a prospective employee perceives in doing a job for a particular company. In the beginning, attraction to the organization, employer attractiveness is positively connected to the effectiveness of job application intention (Sivertzen, Nilsen, and Olafsen, 2013). The workforce has become more demographically diverse, encompassing individuals from different age groups such as experienced Baby Boomers to technologically connected Generation Z-ers. This trend indicates a growing range of ages within the labor force (Heather, 2022). There tends to be a tendency to have varying demands for different generations (Reis and Braga, 2016). The most likely way for an organization to meet the expectations of its employees in terms of work may be determined by generational differences (Maier et al., 2015).

The methods and equipment for employer branding, which are considered as the attributes of attractiveness, are perceived differently by newer generations compared to earlier generations. For instance, Generation Z may not find the same qualities attractive as millennials (Parvin, 2021). In order to effectively attract and manage the new cohort of employees, it is essential for organizations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the work values held by the new generation, and how these values may differ from those of previous generations (Twenge et al, 2010). Considering the dynamic workforce, organizations should reconsider their current strategies and make notable improvements to their recruitment processes in order to attractive to individuals from new generational cohorts. It is important to acknowledge that new generations may have varying expectations and preferences when it comes to assessing employer attractiveness.

Research Objective

The objective of this study is to examine the dimensions of employer attractiveness to potential millennials and Generation Z employees in relation to their intention to apply for the job. Through the literature review that was completed, the following research objective was chosen:

- To address the significant employer attractiveness factors from millennials and Generation Z perspectives which influence their job application intention.

Significance of Study

The changes in demographics and economy in the business world have led to an increase in the importance of improving employer branding strategy. To recruit employees, factors that increase employer attractiveness are what an organization must understand to increase the number of job applicants (Soeling et al, 2022). Generating intentions from the targeted candidates to apply for an available job in the organization is one of the key successful results of the attraction process in the organization recruitment (Gomes and Neves, 2011). To integrate factors that contribute to employer attractiveness, the organization must understand those factors clearly in order to compete successfully in attracting employees (Berthon et al., 2005). The major differences between each generation that possibly have in the workforce could not only cause to more degree of confliction but also lead the organization to certainly reevaluate its human resource management practices, including recruitment and selection process, retention, assessment, and feedback (Reis and Barga, 2016). There are currently substantial studies available on dimensions of employer attractiveness regarding job application intention in many countries (Gomes and Neves, 2011; Arachchige and Robertson, 2013; Sivertzen et al., 2013; Tanwar and Prasad, 2016; Ruchika and Prasad, 2019; Santiago, 2019; Soeling et al., 2022). However, there is a limited number of studies that analyze from the perspectives of millennials and Generation Z, with only a few exceptions, including Thailand. According to Alniacika, Eratb, and Akcinib (2012), the concept of employer branding is not universally applicable as the attractiveness of employer branding differs across countries. This suggests that the characteristics of employer attractiveness as perceived by millennials and Generation Z in Thailand may vary from the findings of earlier studies. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap in the existing literature and examine the role of employer attractiveness in relation to job application intention of millennials and Generation Z in Thailand. Given the challenges and strong competition in the recruitment of employees, it is crucial for organizations to have a clear comprehensive of the attributes that make them attractive to potential candidates. Additionally, it is important for organizations to be well-prepared and implement effective strategies to successfully recruit early talents. The organizations have to recognize the expectations of applicants in order to attract their intention and encourage them to consider applying for job opportunities within the organization.

Literature Review

This part presents a review and discussion of the literature that primarily focuses on concepts and dimensions related to employer attractiveness. The literature is deemed significant for the purpose of this research, which examines employer attractiveness attributes that influence the job application intention of millennials and Generation Z.

Employer Attractiveness

The notion of employer attractiveness was first introduced by Turban and Greening (1997), wherein it was elucidated as the extent to which an individual should perceive an organization as a highly attractive employer for themselves. Employer attractiveness is associated with the interest a prospective employee perceives in working with a particular organization as an employee (Berthon et al., 2005). Berthon et al. (2005) have developed the Employer Attractiveness Scale by incorporating the three dimensions previously suggested by Ambler and Barrow (1996). The scale comprises of five attributes that contribute to the overall attractiveness of an employer. These characteristics comprise Interest and Social Values, encapsulating the psychological dimension, Development and Application Values, embodying the practical dimension, and Economic Value, relating to the economic attribute. According to Ehrhart and Ziegert (2005), the organizational attractiveness refers to the degree to which applicants are interested in considering the organization as a potential workplace and the organizational attractiveness has been reviewed regarding the perspectives of applicants. The perception and evaluation of potential employees regarding the organization could determine the organization's attractiveness. In other words, the closer desired attributes of the potential candidates to the offered value propositions from the organization, the higher employer attractiveness will be (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). When individuals are choosing an employer, they take into account various factors known as attractiveness attributes. These attributes are given priority based on the individuals' specific needs and expectations (Cable and Turban, 2001). The influence of factors regarding the employer attractiveness may alter relying on perceiving of job seekers (Alniaçik and Alniaçik, 2012). The study conducted by Arachchige and Robertson (2013) revealed notable variations in the perceptions regarding employer attractiveness between experienced workers and undergraduates. Specifically, experienced workers placed significant importance on the social and individual elements of the work environment, particularly an engaging and enjoyable atmosphere, as well as personal respect while undergraduates placed greater emphasis on utilizing their knowledge and considering future career prospects. The study findings by Sivertzen, Nilsen, and Olafsen (2013) demonstrated that, in the context of the hospitality and tourism industry in Norway, the employer attractiveness factors that had the most influence on employees' intention to remain with their current employers were innovativeness, creativity, and economic value. This study also highlighted differences in dimensions and indicators compared to the original study conducted by Berthon et al. (2005), which can be attributed to cultural variances between Australia and Norway. There are distinct between an individual’s perception about the organization as a prospective employer and the intention to positively trace a position with that particular organization however both are relevant dimensions in term of employer attractiveness (Altmann and Suess, 2015). Potential employees use employer attractiveness measures to forecast the potential employers’ organizational intentions. Employer attractiveness measures serve as a means for prospective employees to anticipate the organizational tendency of potential employers (Highhouse et al., 2003). The employer attractiveness scale (EmpAt) developed by Berthon et al. (2005) has the attractiveness attributes extension referring to the previous initiated dimensions by Ambler and Barrow (1996) which has discussed and applied in various studies more often (Gomes and Neves, 2011; Alniaçik and Alniaçik, 2012; Arachchige and Robertson, 2013; Alnıaçık, Alnıaçık, Erat, and Akçin, 2014; Sivertzen, Nilsen, and Olafsen, 2013; Reis and Braga, 2016; Benraïss-Noailles and Viot, 2021), contributing more as a theatrical model in terms of employer attractiveness dimensions.

Employer attractiveness holds significant importance in the recruitment process as it directly impacts the ability to effectively compete for highly skilled and talented employees. Berthon et al. (2005) attempted to develop a scale for assessing employer attractiveness from the perspective of prospective employees. The EmpAt scale was developed to classify attractiveness into the following five attributes:

(1) Interest Value: this attribute evaluates the degree to which an individual is allured by the organization that encourages challenging and motivating work, in a stimulating environment that supports inventiveness and innovation to produce excellent and novel products and services.

(2) Social value: this dimension evaluates the extent to which an individual is attracted to an organization that promotes a positive, content, and pleasant atmosphere, fostering camaraderie and teamwork.

(3) Economic value: this value measures factors such as a salary that is higher than average, a comprehensive remuneration program, strong job security, and ample opportunities for promotion within organization.

(4) Development value: this attribute measures the degree to which an individual is allured by an organization that delivers employee recognition, makes employees feel good and self-confident, and gives the possibility of gaining career advancement experience and and a springboard for future employment.

(5) Application value: this includes a customer-oriented and humanitarian organization that gives employees an opportunity to apply knowledge and proficiency and teach others what they have learned.

Intention to apply a job

The act of job application is characterized as the aspiration of prospective employees to secure a position within a particular organization, while the intention to accept the job refers to likelihood to accept a job which is offered by the organization (Chapman, et al., 2005). In the context of recruitment, the actual decision of applicants to apply for a job with an organization can be greatly influenced by their job application intention (Gomes and Neves, 2011). The act of pursuing a job can be seen as an individual's choice to either actively pursue a particular job opportunity or passively remain among pool of applicants (Chapman, et al., 2005). The attitude towards the employer branding and awareness of its attractive attributes have been found to have a positively correlation with an applicant's job application intention in that organization (Collins and Stevens, 2002). The job application intention is influenced by organization attractiveness and work characteristics (Gomes and Neves, 2010). Also, a study conducted by Highhouse et al., (2003) described that employer attractiveness evaluations are applied as delegate organizational pursuit measurements. There were three constructs in terms of the intent to join an organization which had been segregated in their study: general attractiveness of an organization, an applicant’s intent to pursue and the prestige of the organization. And the study found that an applicant’s intent is positively related with employer attractiveness and organizational prestige. The study by Highhouse et al., 2003 has played a significant role in the dimensions analysis regarding an applicant’s intent to join in many studies (Gomes and Neves, 2011; Ergun and Tatar, 2016; Tanwar and Prasad, 2017; Santiago, 2019; Soeling et al., 2022). The intention correlates to the personal preference of job seekers to apply a job application to the company, therefore determining their job application intention to apply for the organization, which is the crucial information that could affect the success of organization recruitment (Gomes and Neves, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

The purpose of the conceptual framework is to streamline the examination of the correlation between independent variables and dependent variable, namely the intention to apply for a job. The independent variables encompass social value, interest value, development value, economic value, and application value. This study aims to analyze how these factors influence the job application intentions of millennials and Generation Z.

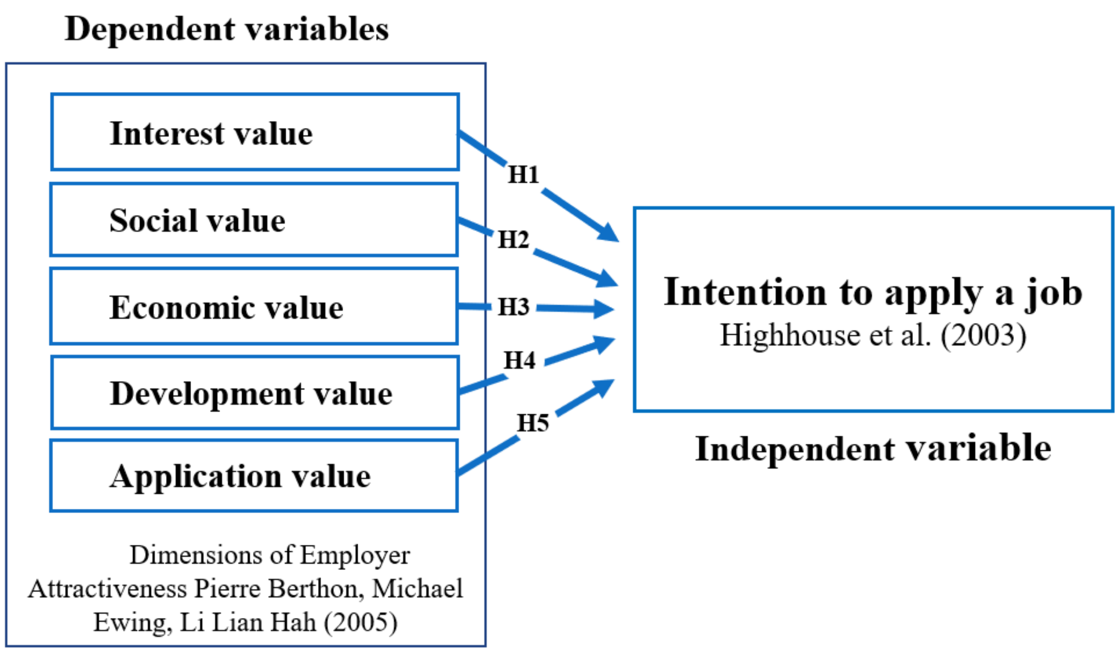

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Hypotheses

In line with the above-mentioned objective, the following five hypotheses were created and tested in this study which are:

- Hypothesis 1: The influence of interest value on the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z is significant.

- Hypothesis 2: The influence of social value on the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z is significant.
- Hypothesis 3: The influence of economic value on the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z is significant.
- Hypothesis 4: The influence of development value on the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z is significant.
- Hypothesis 5: The influence of application value on the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z is significant.

Research Methodology

The study utilizes the descriptive research approach with a quantitative method. The objective of the descriptive research in this study is to examine the impact of employer attractiveness factors on the intention of millennials and Generation Z individuals to apply for a job within organizations. An online questionnaire was employed as a survey instrument for gathering data from the respondents, encompassing three parts which are demographic inquiries, the 'employer attractiveness' scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005), and the intent to apply a job scale developed by Highhouse et al. (2003). A five-point Likert Scale was used. A sample size of 400 is calculated and aimed by using Taro Yamane unknown population method (Yamane, 1973). The study used non-probability sampling and the sampling technique employed was convenient sampling. A total of 400 individuals, who are millennials and Generation Z living in Thailand, aged between 18 and 41 years and born between 1981 and 2004, participated in the study. The sampling units were categorized into two groups: Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) and Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2004). Data was collected through an online questionnaire using Google Form. The responses received from the questionnaire survey will be examined and validated for accuracy and completeness. To analyze the data, ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings, and prove hypotheses and framework, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used. Descriptive statistics (such as mean, percentages, frequencies, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (specifically, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis) were employed as statistical methods. Additionally, the scale reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) value is a value of 0.70 or above (Nunnally, 1978) to measure internal consistency. This analysis will help the researcher answer research questions regarding the influence of employer attractiveness factors on intention to apply for a job and conduct a thorough investigation into the potential influence of each factor on individuals' intention to apply for a job.

Descriptive Analysis

The demographic summary of 400 respondents, who are millennials and Generation Z living in Thailand, are categorized into 5 groups as described below.

Table 1:

	N = 400	Frequency	%
Age	19-25	189	47.3
	26-41	211	52.8
Gender	Male	162	40.5
	Female	164	41.0
	LGBTQ+	74	18.5
Education	Below bachelor's degree	58	14.5
	Bachelor's degree	308	77.0
	Master's degree	34	8.5
	PhD's degree	0	0.0
Occupation	Student	32	8.0
	Government official	97	24.3
	Company employee	200	50.0
	State enterprise employee	40	10.0
	Others	27	6.8
	Unemployed	4	1.0
Income	< 10,000 THB	30	7.5
	10,001-20,000 THB	163	40.8
	20,001-30,000 THB	167	41.8
	30,001-40,000 THB	14	3.5
	> 40,000 THB	26	6.5

Gender has been classified into Male, Female, and LGBTQ+. The findings indicate that 41.0% of the participants identified as Female, followed by Male with 40.5%, and LGBTQ+ with 18.5%, respectively.

The age was divided into two groups consisting of individuals aged 19-25 and 26-41 years old. According to the analysis of the collected data, it was found that the largest age group was comprised of Millennials, aged 26-41 years old, accounting for 52.8%. This was followed by Generation Z, aged 19-25 years old, making up 47.3% of the total population.

The education level was divided as "Below Bachelor's Degree", "Bachelor's Degree", "Master's Degree", and "Doctoral Degree". The majority of the respondents hold "Bachelor's Degree" with 77.0%, followed by "Below Bachelor's Degree" 14.5% and "Master's Degree" 8.5%, respectively.

The occupation of the participants was divided into six categories, namely "Company Employee", "Government Official", "State Enterprise Employee", "Student", "Others", and "Unemployed". The findings illustrate that the largest group among the respondents was Company Employees, accounting for 50.0% of the total. Following them were Government Officials with 24.3%, State Enterprise Employees with 10.0%, Students with 8.0%, Others with 6.8%, and Unemployed with 1.0%.

There were 5 options to indicate income ranges. It was found that the majority of respondents, 40.8%, had an income range of 10,001-20,000 Thai Baht, followed by 41.8% who reported an income range of 20,001-30,000 Thai Baht. A smaller proportion, 7.5%, indicated an income below 10,000 Thai Baht, while 6.5% reported an income exceeding 40,000 Thai Baht. Lastly, 3.5% of participants stated an income range of 30,001-40,000 Thai Baht.

Summary of Findings

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and reliabilities for all variables.

Table 1: Principal component analysis results of employer attractiveness scale

Scale Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach Alpha
Factor 1: Interest Value	4.33	0.604	0.770
Factor 2: Social Value	4.66	0.500	0.817
Factor 3: Economic Value	4.50	0.684	0.808
Factor 4: Development Value	4.24	0.759	0.844
Factor 5: Application Value	4.21	0.732	0.840
Overall			**0.927**

According to Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha of each employer attractiveness attribute was examined to measure the reliability of the survey of 400 respondents. The scale's overall reliability is deemed satisfactory, with a coefficient alpha value of 0.927. The interest value dimension, social value dimension, economic value dimension, development value dimension, and application value dimension all display satisfactory reliabilities, with respective alpha coefficients of 0.770, 0.817, 0.808, 0.844, and 0.840.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.686[a]	.471	.464	.22566

Table 3: ANOVA

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Regression	17.851	5	3.570	70.108	.000[b]
Residual	20.064	394	.051		
Total	**37.915**	**399**			

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.975	0.156		12.657	0.000	
Interest Value	0.020	0.036	0.028	0.551	0.582	1.912
Social Value	0.002	0.043	0.002	0.040	0.968	2.101
Economic Value	0.336	0.042	0.570	8.040	0.000	3.749
Development Value	0.059	0.027	0.117	2.174	0.030	2.148
Application Value	0.009	0.026	0.016	0.332	0.740	1.801

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows R2 value (Known as Model Fit or Coefficient of Determination) equals to 0.471 which means that the independent variables of this research can explain the intention to apply for a job of Millennials and Generation Z in Thailand at 47.1%.

According to ANOVA results in Table 3, the statistical assumption is made as follows:

H_0: There is no significant influence of all independent variables on the intention of millennials and Generation Z to apply for a job.

H_1: At least one independent variable exerts a significant influence on the intention of millennials and Generation Z to apply for a job.

Table 3 displays a Significance value of 0.000, indicating that it is less than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

Multicollinearity arises when there is highly correlation among two or more explanatory variables in the multiple regression model and multicollinearity will cause problems in identifying the most influential explanatory variables (Daoud, 2017). Multicollinearity is ascertained by performing tolerance and variance inflation factor examination for each explanatory variable. Tolerance values lower than 0.1 to 0.2 show collinearity (Kim, 2019). The variance inflation factor (VIF) is used to measure and quantify inflation of the variance. Table 4 shows correlation coefficients of all tolerance values were greater than the cutoff value of 0.2, and it was also supported by the VIF values of construct were lower than the cutoff value of 5. Therefore, the assumption of multicollinearity existence between independent variables and dependent variables was not met. The dependent variables were moderately correlated, and the hypotheses were not violated.

A multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate whether employer attractiveness factors could be significant predictors of intention to apply for a job. The regression analysis presented in Table 4 revealed that among the factors examined, only economic value and development value exhibited significant effects on the intention of millennials and Generation Z individuals to apply for a job. These effects were found to be statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05 (Sig.<0.05). Thus, the third (H3) and fourth (H4) hypotheses are supported. Also, the Beta Coefficient analysis revealed that economic value and development value have Beta (β) equals 0.570 and 0.117, respectively. However, interest value (β=0.028), social value (β=0.002), and application value (β=0.016) have no significant influences between the perceived of these values and the intention to apply for a job among millennials and Generation Z (Sig.>0.05), which means that the first (H1), second (H2), and fifth (5) hypotheses are not supported. The employer attractiveness factors which have the most significant influence on the job application intention are Economic Value and Development Value, respectively. The statement "An attractive overall compensation package" has the greatest impact on employer attractiveness among the elements of Economic Value. This is followed by "An above average basic salary" and "Job security within the organization", respectively. In terms of Development Value, the statement "Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization" has the greatest influence on employer attractiveness. This is followed by "Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization" and "Gaining career-enhancing experience" in order.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The research findings highlight key-point in managerial implications of the human resources department in implementing effective early recruiting strategies and improving retention strategies for millennials and Generation Z employees. Understanding the factors that attract job seekers, especially those from younger generations, can help organizations attract and retain talented young employees. Given the highly competitive labor market, organizations have to be extraordinary to attract skilled employees. Organizations have to reconsider current recruiting strategies and develop more effective ones to be a workplace choice. Continuous efforts to enhance employer attractiveness are necessary. The findings suggest that Millennials and Generation Z prioritize economic value and development value. They are interested in organizations that offer competitive salaries, attractive compensation packages, job security, and opportunities for advancement. This result is consistent with research results of Alnıaçık et al., 2014, Reis and Braga, 2016, Dabirian et al., 2017, Parvin, 2021, Twenge, 2010. They are likely to appreciate the organization that allows them to have the opportunity to choose their benefits and ensures that they are compensated fairly for their work and skills. They may believe that their contributions are valued by the organization, as evidenced by the rewards they receive. Also, they are interested in an organization that delivers employee recognition, makes employee feels good and self-confident, and gives possibility for gaining career advancement experience and a springboard to employment in the future. This result is consistent with research results of Alnıaçık, Alnıaçık, Erat, and a springboard for future employment. Akçin, 2014, Reis and Braga, 2016, Ng et al., 2010. Recognizing their contributions to the organization will provide them with personal fulfillment. Additionally, acknowledging their efforts will not only enhance employee retention and commitment, but also make millennials and Generation Z individuals feel valued and enhance their self-esteem. Nevertheless, there were some limitations to this study. Firstly, the sample group in this study includes employees from both the private and public sectors, without specifying the sector or industry. Each sector or industry may have different influences on the perception of employer attractiveness for young job applicants. Future research should explore other contexts or individual characteristics specifically. For example, separately studying sample groups of private and public sector employees, or employees from same industry to limit the similarities in the research environment. Secondly, conducting research with larger populations will make more generalizations and increase the reliability of the results. Thirdly, this study includes millennials and Generation Z, future research should have screening question in order to study perceptions from those who are actively looking for new employment. Lastly, while this study examined five employer attractiveness factors, there are likely other factors that influence intention to apply for a job, there are unobserved employer attractiveness factors possibly exert influence on the intention to apply for a job. Therefore, future research is recommended to include more factors affecting the intention to apply for a job such as diversity, reputation, management, and work/life balance which may contribute more value to knowledge of human resources managerial implications.

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Research on marketing strategy of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center

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Abstract

Since the reform and opening up, China's rapid economic development, the comprehensive national strength increasing, people's living standard is increasing day by day. At the same time, people's attitude towards education is also changing, with more and more parents paying attention to early education. The purpose of this research is to study the marketing strategy of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center. This paper uses 4Ps, 7Ps and 4Cs theories to explore corresponding marketing strategies from the perspectives of product settings, customer groups, sales channels and communication service quality, and summarizes its successful experience and shortcomings. I hope to be helpful for the further development of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center and provide certain theoretical references for other early education enterprises. Promote the further improvement of China's early education marketing theory.

Keywords: Gymbore, Early Education, Marketing Strategy

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Introduction

Maria Montessori, a famous Italian early childhood educator, put it this way: "The development of a person in the first three years of life is more extensive and important than any stage in the whole life... If we look at the change of life, the adaptation and conquest of the outside world, and the achievements made, the function of the human being is actually greater in the period from the age of 0-3 than the sum of all the stages after the age of 3 until death [1]." Chen Heqin, a famous Chinese child educator and child psychologist, also said: "Childish period is the most important period of life. Habits, words, skills, thoughts, attitudes and emotions should be laid a foundation during this period. If the foundation is not stable, it is not easy to form a sound personality[2]."In addition, according to the continuous follow-up survey of children's intellectual development conducted by the famous contemporary American educator and psychologist B.S.Bloom, it is found that 0-3 years old is the key period of individual brain development.The brain weight of a newborn baby is about 400 grams, 25 percent of that of an adult.Period 0 ~ 1 years old baby brain weight fast growth, six months after rapid growth to 50% of the adult human brain weighs, 1 at the age of about 66% of the adult human brain weighs the; At the age of 2, the brain weight of infants has reached 75% of the adult brain weight, which is three times more than that of infants at birth.By age 3, the brain weight of a baby is already close to that of a fully mature individual, and the growth rate tends to slow down after age 3 [3].It can be seen that the important period of brain development and intelligence development of infants is 0 to 3 years old. If early education is carried out during this period, and targeted intellectual development, physical exercise and emotional cultivation are completed, it will have twice the result with half the effort

On December 27, 2015, the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th National People's Congress passed the Decision on Amending the Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China. According to the Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China, Chapter 3, Article 18 - The State encourages a couple to have two children. The universal two-child policy came into effect on January 1, 2016. On May 31, 2021, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held a meeting to review the Decision on Optimizing the Fertility Policy to Promote Long-term and Balanced Population Development [4] and pointed out that in order to further optimize the fertility policy, the policy of allowing a couple to have three children and supporting measures were implemented. The Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and The State Council on Optimizing the Fertility Policy and Promoting Long-term and Balanced Population Development [5] was promulgated on July 20, 2021. On August 20, 2021, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress voted to adopt the decision on amending the Population and Family Planning Law. The revised Population and Family Planning Law stipulates that the state promotes age-appropriate marriage and childbearing, and a couple can have three children. This means that as long as the conditions stipulated by laws and regulations are met, a couple can ask for arrangements to have children again [6], and the infant population will continue to increase. In addition, the post-80s and post-90s have become the main force of three children, and these two generations have a relatively high level of education, attach importance to their children's educational conditions and educational environment, and are willing to invest more education funds for their children. The increase in the infant population and their parents' attention to education will inevitably promote the rapid development of the early education industry.

However, at present, due to the short research time on early education in China, there are few experts who specialize in exploring early education theories. China lacks systematic research on early childhood education market and its marketing strategy, and lacks innovative early education marketing theory system. Even most early education marketing theories are introduced from western developed countries. Although "early education for infants and young children aged 0-3" has been included in the Outline of the National Medium - and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020), the outline does not elaborate on how to carry out "early education"[7]. Song Lihua, a professor at the College of Humanities and Communication at Shanghai Normal University, believes that the development of early education in China is in the stage of "blooming of a hundred flowers" compared with the mature early education system abroad, not only the industry rules "crossing the river by feeling the stones", but also the relevant laws and regulations and the political and legal system are relatively lacking. This is bound to lead to the early education industry mixed, access barriers are not high chaos, which is not conducive to the rapid development of early education in our country [8]. On the other hand, at present, the development of China's early education industry is limited to some areas and some higher education groups, in the third and fourth lines and below the urban and rural areas, such as Shantou city, people have less awareness and understanding of early education.

Therefore, it is very necessary to study the marketing strategy of the Golden Baby Early Education Center in Shantou. From the perspective of enterprises, this study is helpful for Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center to clarify its own market positioning, construct marketing strategies suitable for its own business situation, and achieve the goal of sustainable development. At the same time, it also gives certain reference value to other early education centers of Shantou, which improves the marketing ability of the early education industry of Shantou to a certain extent. From the social point of view, this study is helpful to strengthen parents' awareness and understanding of early education, realize the importance of early education, master scientific parenting style, improve parenting experience, and let children have a good growth environment; From the national perspective, this research can further enrich the marketing materials in the field of early education market and promote the further improvement of the marketing theory of early education in China.

Background of marketing strategy

Philip Kotler (1995) believes that "the most important function of marketing is to enable companies to have a clear positioning of their own needs and development, estimate and clarify the amount of their own needs, select and determine the target market, and identify appropriate goods, services and programs to better serve the target market." In addition, he also explored the marketing strategies of educational enterprises, and proposed that the services and products of the education industry should be planned and designed according to the current market objectives [9].

McCarthy (2003) argued that "marketing is responsible for the development of business activities of the company, introducing the company's products or services into the market through marketing, and meeting consumer needs, so that the company can obtain corresponding economic benefits." And it's a type of social and economic activity where the fundamental goal of marketing is to meet social needs and further achieve social goals [10]."

Piredi (2014) proposed that if an educational enterprise wants to reasonably use marketing in its own teaching management, it should deeply explore the needs and views of target consumer groups, give timely feedback on the needs and views of consumers, and then put them into practice [11].

Hao Lili (2015) put forward that education marketing can be said to be a relatively new concept in the field of education and marketing research in China. If early education enterprises want to obtain higher economic income and achieve sustainable development in the education market, they should gradually build their own characteristics and integrate such characteristics into corresponding marketing strategies [12].

Li Yingkang (2018) mainly carried out detailed research on China's education and training market, and combined with theoretical knowledge in the field of economics, carried out in-depth research on the supply and demand status quo, cycle and development prospects of the education market, found the shortcomings, and then gave corresponding improvement measures and suggestions [13].

Since the 1960s, all countries have begun to pay attention to the development of early education. By the 1990s, many developed countries had built a relatively comprehensive marketing theory system of early education industry, and more developing countries also gradually began to pay attention to the development of early childhood education. In 2001, the United Nations Children's Fund mentioned in its "State of the World's Children" report that children should start education as early as possible to lay a good foundation for development [14]. At the same time, we should attach importance to the development of early education. At present, more and more countries regard early education as the best competitive strategy in the 21st century, and integrate it into the national strategic development link, which has received great attention and support. Countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia attach importance to providing better education services for infants and young children under the age of three in the social construction process [15].

Maria Montessori once pointed out that infants and young children will have various "sensitive periods" in the growth process, during which children have a strong willingness to perceive and understand the external world. In this stage, children have strong learning ability and high acceptance, and the whole person is full of vitality and passion. She believes that the foundation laid by the sensitive period of infancy is very important for human intellectual development.

China's early education industry and the corresponding early education marketing have also experienced decades of development this paper divides it into three development periods:

The first period (reform and opening up -1990): After China implemented the reform and opening up policy, the corresponding economic development gradually accelerated, and the concept of early education was gradually introduced into China. However, the main service of the early education centers established during this period was to take care of children, and they could not provide good education services. And at this stage, Beijing, Shanghai and other cities began to explore marketing theories, but most of the research at this stage is to translate foreign research literature, learn from foreign marketing theory system, of course, this also creates a good condition for the construction of China's early education marketing theory system.

The second period (1990-2010): Due to the in-depth development of China's market economy, all walks of life have been rapid development, the number of early education enterprises is also increasing, forming a certain market scale. In terms of marketing theory exploration, more and more scholars are participating in marketing theory exploration activities. The state also attaches great importance to the cultivation of marketing talents, and has built a professional marketing curriculum system to better apply marketing theory to the practice of all walks of life.

The third period (2010 to now): The state attaches great importance to the development of early education, and has promulgated many relevant institutional policies, such as the Program for Children's Development and the National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development. From the perspective of marketing theory, although there are many researches related to marketing in our country at this stage, there are not many outstanding research results. However, due to the rapid development of China's early education market, the corresponding research on early education marketing theory will inevitably become more and more substantial [16].

Gao Hong (2016) mainly introduced the marketing system in his research and carried out in-depth reform of the company's internal management through the marketing oriented strategy, which is the basis for the smooth marketing activities of early education enterprises [17].

Mao Lingli (2018) said if the early education industry wants to achieve a win-win situation in terms of economic benefits and sustainable development, it should first have a real-time understanding and a clear understanding of the market situation of the early education industry, in order to build a reasonable and applicable marketing mix strategy [18].

Definition of marketing strategy Terms

Broadly speaking, marketing is a process of achieving the needs and management of individuals or organizations by creating value and exchanging value with others. In the narrow sense, especially in the business environment, marketing is "the process of creating value for customers and establishing a solid relationship with them in order to obtain benefits from customers [19]." The basic idea of marketing is that enterprises realize their own profits by creating value for customers. Therefore, marketing has two purposes: one is to create value for customers, and the other is to obtain value for enterprises [20]. Successful marketing strategy is based on the market and customer demand as the basis, through the design and creation of valuable marketing strategy to deliver customer value, establish a solid customer relationship, in return, enterprises can get from customers in the form of market share, profit, customer loyalty and other forms of value.

The term "marketing mix" was first coined by Harvard Professor Neil Borden in 1953 to suggest that the changing needs of a market are in some way influenced by "marketing elements" or "marketing variables." Different combination of elements will bring different results. Effective combination of marketing elements should be carried out for different development stages of enterprises to meet market demand and create maximum value. With the birth of the marketing mix theory, in 1960, Jerome McCarthy, a professor at the University of Michigan, first summarized "marketing elements" into four basic elements in his book "Basic Marketing" : Product, Price, Promotion and Place have formed a marketing strategy combination with "4P" as the core [21] is product: pay attention to product development and design, and put product function in the first place; Price: According to different market positioning, develop different pricing strategies; Promotion: To increase the purpose of selling a product by means of a series of marketing actions or promotional methods; Channels: Enterprises choose effective distribution channels to circulate goods to customers. The proposal of 4P marketing strategy combination theory has laid the basic theoretical framework of marketing theory, which has been widely recognized and practiced, and has a profound impact on the development of marketing theory.

In 1956, Wendell Smith, an American marketer, first proposed the concept of market segmentation from the perspective of strategy.In 1967, Philip Kotler, the father of American marketing, clarified the marketing mix method with 4P as the core in his book "Management Marketing", and clarified the core content of STP from the perspective of marketing to form the overall marketing system. Subsequently, it was further developed and improved, and finally formed the famous STP theory, which was mainly divided into (1) Market Segmenting (2) Market Targeting (3) Market Positioning [22].

In 1990, Professor Robert Lauterbaum, an American scholar, proposed a new view of marketing corresponding to the four Ps of traditional marketing - the "4C" theory, resetting the four basic elements of marketing mix: Customer, Cost, Convenience and Communication are a combination of marketing strategies oriented to customer demand, which enables enterprises to pay more attention to the market and customers and establish a dynamic relationship with customers.

It is mainly reflected in (1) customers: from the needs and interests of customers, the production of product value to meet the needs of customers; (2) Cost: the cost paid by an enterprise when it considers meeting customer needs; (3) Convenience: enterprises build their distribution channels according to the convenience of customers; (4) Communication: enterprises and customers to establish a two-way exchange and communication relationship. 4C theory is based on the premise of exploring the needs of consumers, and its core is customer strategy, which has created another miracle in the market practice.

In 2001, American scholar Elliott Eidenberg proposed a new era of marketing ideas in his book 4R Marketing, that is, the 4R theory - the four elements of new marketing: Relationship, Retrenchment, Relevancy and Reward [23]. It points out that in the new economic era, how to establish a long-term relationship with customers and make customers' experience of using products or services more unique and pleasant is a marketing model in the new economic era. It emphasizes that through integrated marketing plan, enterprises can establish interactive and win-win relationship with customers, close contact with customers, and form a unique competitive advantage. 4R theory is also a huge step forward in the practice of marketing strategy.

With the constant changes of the market, marketing theories are also continuously enriched and developed. In marketing practice, 4P, 7P, 4C and 4R theories are not superior or inferior, but there are substantial correlations and differences in their observation points and angles of raising questions. 4P theory was born in the era of saturated economy, emphasizing to meet market demand and taking product as the center; 7P theory was developed in 1981 when Booms and Bitner proposed adding three "service Ps" to the traditional marketing theory of 4P; 4C theory, customer-oriented, more in line with the market economy to customer demand as the center of the concept; In the new economic era, the 4R theory is based on relationship marketing as the core, competition as the orientation, to establish customer loyalty.

To sum up, foreign theoretical research on marketing strategies has achieved rich results, and pays attention to empirical research, and applies the research results to practice to promote the rapid development of small and medium-sized private early education enterprises guided by marketing

The importance of marketing strategy

(1) The importance of theory

China's research on early education is relatively short, and there are fewer experts who specialize in exploring early education theories. There is a lack of innovative early education marketing theory system. Even most early education marketing theories are introduced from western developed countries, but they have been improved to some extent according to China's national conditions. However, our country has had a good concept of education since ancient times. If it is organically integrated with modern early education and the marketing of early education is effectively promoted, it is very beneficial to the development of early education in our country. Therefore, it is very necessary to explore the organic integration of good education concepts and marketing theories at home and abroad, which can promote the further improvement of early education marketing theories in China.

(2) Practical importance

The competition in the early education market of Shantou city is becoming more and more fierce, and from the current development of Gymboree early education institution, it has revealed many shortcomings in the marketing link, such as: single marketing model, fewer sales channels and lack of long-term applicable marketing strategy. This study will focus on exploring the deficiencies of marketing links in the current stage of the Golden Baby early Education Center in Shantou, and establish a set of marketing strategies in line with its long-term development. And this can also give a certain reference to other early education centers with the same problems, so that the marketing ability of the whole early education market has been improved to a certain extent; In addition, it is beneficial to enhance the public's understanding of early education centers and marketing, have a more correct understanding and understanding of early education, and further enrich the marketing materials in the field of early education market.

marketing strategy of Early Education Center

As early as the end of the 19th century, the embryonic form of marketing theory had already appeared in the United States. At that time, the capital market was in the stage of rapid development, and the application of marketing theory was not very extensive. It was not until World War I and World War II that the theory of marketing was widely introduced into the process of practical inquiry. At this stage, various types of companies in the capital market began to use marketing theories to expand their scale and achieve more long-term development. The characteristics of marketing theory in this period are as follows: the scope of marketing is still small, most of them just carry out some sales activities, do not discuss marketing technology and advertising technology from a more in-depth perspective, and do not focus on the research of corporate structure planning. After the end of World War II, marketing theory developed rapidly. During this period, the development of capitalist market and industry was very rapid, and the social economy and productivity were growing rapidly. In order to effectively balance the goal of matching consumption capacity and production capacity, and effectively improve the phenomenon of oversupply produced by the capital market, W. Anderson mentioned that marketing is all kinds of activities that can promote producers and customer groups to carry out potential transactions. The current marketing theory has entered a mature period, marketing theory and many related theories organically combined into a complete theoretical system, diversified marketing strategies and measures have been applied in practice, to promote the rapid development of market economy.

(1) 4Ps marketing theory

4Ps marketing theory is to carry out relevant exploration and analysis with a certain company as a case study. In the process of marketing activities, companies are generally affected by two aspects: first, external factors, such as: society, technology, economy, politics and geographical location. Second, there are internal factors, such as the quality and price of the products or services produced by the company, which the company can control. In the process of selling products or services, if the company can meet the social production needs of this period, then it means that the company's products or services have a good market.

The central content of 4Ps theory is Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Product refers to the company's production of goods or services that meet the needs of the market, and through marketing products can obtain the corresponding income, which is also the basic guarantee for the normal operation of the company; The price is the price of the product in the market, which needs to be determined according to many factors such as cost, supply and demand and brand effect. Channel is the company to carry out corresponding marketing activities in the process, to win more consumers, the company to build a number of sales channels to effectively ensure the smooth sales of products; The promotion is in the actual product sales link, the company according to the actual situation of the market, a targeted and applicable way to promote sales, which can effectively ensure that the company's products have a better market competitive advantage and further enhance the sales of products[24].

(2) 7Ps marketing theory

The Marketing Theory of 7Ps was developed in 1981 when Booms and Bitner proposed adding three "service Ps" to the traditional marketing theory of 4Ps. The three "service Ps" are: People, Process, and Physical evidence.

People: All people are directly or indirectly involved in the consumption process of a certain service, which is a very important point of 7P marketing mix. Knowledge workers, white-collar employees, managers, and some consumers add additional value to the existing supply of total social goods or services, which is often very significant. Process: The process by which a service is realized through certain procedures, mechanisms, and activities (i.e. the consumer management Process), is a key element of marketing strategy. Physical evidence: includes the environment, convenient tools, and effective guidance. It can be interpreted as the display of goods and services themselves, even if the things being promoted are closer to the customer. The importance of tangible displays is that customers can get a tactile clue to experience the quality of the service you provide. Therefore, the best service is to turn the unreachable into a tangible service.

(3) 4Cs marketing theory

In 1990, Lauterbaum first mentioned the 4Cs marketing theory, which is mainly customer-oriented, and further constructed the four elements of the marketing mix, namely: Customer, Cost, Convenience and Communication. 4Cs marketing theory puts consumer satisfaction in the first place, followed by reducing the purchase cost of consumers as much as possible, paying attention to the convenience of consumers to buy products or services, starting from the perspective of customers rather than standing at the company level to formulate marketing strategies, and finally, it is necessary to carry out scientific and effective marketing exchanges and communication with customers as the center 25].

(4) STP marketing theory

In the 1950s, Wended Smith put forward STP marketing strategy, which mainly includes three aspects: market segmentation, target market and market positioning[26].

Segmenting refers to the process of marketing in which companies need to distinguish and identify potential customers. The company uses the appropriate survey mode to deeply understand the current market demand, more clearly recognize the characteristics of customer behavior and needs, and then subdivide customers according to the division criteria, so as to facilitate the enterprise to provide differentiated services for different types of customers. In the process of carrying out market segmentation activities, the company needs to carry out a large number of market research activities, and carry out scientific analysis and exploration of the obtained information and data, so as to reasonably segment customer groups. In the subdivision link, reasonable control and division standards are needed, and different customer types need to have distinct typical characteristics, and the number reaches the corresponding standard. After market segmentation, it can bring more opportunities for the company to obtain revenue, so that it can find the best production and marketing direction of the company, and lay a solid foundation for the company to carry out corresponding market economic activities. For each type of customer group after market segmentation, the company needs to use the best marketing ideas and strategies.

Targeting: The products or services produced by the company need to meet the current market needs as much as possible and match the corresponding market positioning. Moreover, there are three main types of measures implemented by the company for the target market: one is undifferentiated, the second is differentiated, and the third is concentrated. In the process of selection and decision-making, the company needs to take into account factors that it can control and the external environment of the target market. If it cannot adapt to internal and external environmental factors, it should make timely adjustments.

Market Positioning: If a company wants to achieve the goal that its products or services meet the market demand, it also needs to use market positioning to clarify the image of its products in the customer group, so as to better protect the market competitive advantage of its products or services. After the company carries out market positioning activities, it can more accurately confirm the sales target of products or services in order to better win the market.

(5) SWOT analysis model

In the corresponding marketing activities of the company, in order to complete the specified sales tasks within the specified time, the management needs to use appropriate marketing measures. This paper mainly introduces the SWOT analysis model used in the study.

SWOT analysis, also known as situation analysis, needs to be carried out from the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a certain company. After detailed investigation and listing, it is arranged according to the matrix pattern, and then combined with the theoretical knowledge of systematic analysis, different parts are matched for scientific exploration, and certain conclusions are obtained. And it shows a distinct decision-making nature. SWOT analysis can be used to carry out a comprehensive and detailed exploration of the company, and the actual operation of the company at the present stage can be understood by combining the corresponding analysis content, and then provide an effective basis for the planning of the company's development strategies and measures [27].

SWOT analysis model mainly includes strength and weakness analysis, opportunity and threat analysis, comprehensive analysis. The analysis of strengths and weaknesses explores the company as a whole. The product quality, market audience, cost management, diversification of sales channels and operating environment of the company need to be comprehensively considered and explored. After having a clear understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, the overall ability of the company can be understood. Opportunity and threat analysis show distinct co-existence, that is, the company is facing both opportunities and threats at the same time, which requires the company to explore opportunities and threats to effectively transform, while seizing opportunities for development, the company must also face threats and challenges scientifically, so that the company can reduce the risks as much as possible. After SWOT matrix analysis, the company can have a clearer understanding of what is conducive to the development of the company and what is not conducive to the development of the company, seek advantages and avoid disadvantages, and find scientific improvement measures to create good conditions for the sustainable development of the company.

Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center

Gymboree, as the world's first brand of early childhood education, was founded in 1976 in the United States, is a children's education service company with the core of early childhood education and family parenting. Branches in more than 40 countries around the world, with more than 800 centers worldwide, cumulatively serving more than one million members. It mainly aims at developing the potential of children aged 0 to 5 years old, and provides learning courses through education and entertainment, including music, art and education, guiding children of different nationalities, skin colors and cultural backgrounds to grow up healthily, and creating happy childhood experiences for them. In 2003, Gymboree officially entered China, and gradually established a scientific early education system driven by "academic + technology" and integrated online and offline. Gymboree is committed to realizing the educational vision of "every child grows up happily and every family raises children with confidence".

Now there are two Gymboree early education centers in Shantou, namely, Gymboree New City Center and Shantou Gymboree Vientiane Center, which are located on the 3rd floor of Zone B of New City Plaza, Longhu District, Shantou, and the 2nd floor of Shantou City Vientiane Plaza, Longhu District. Each branch is located in the densely populated area of Shantou city, the use of global unified decoration design style, global unified imported teaching AIDS, the use of environmentally friendly decorative materials in line with international standards, in order to avoid sharp all Yang corners are added circular edge, to create a colorful, healthy and safe environment for baby growth.

The parenting concept of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center is to follow the objective laws of infant growth and development and the characteristics of months, develop the core qualities of children's growth - happiness, physical intelligence, learning ability, systematic tracking and improving children's overall ability development.

1. The advantages of Gymboree Early Education Center

(1) High brand awareness

Gymboree Early Education Center is a brand from the United States. In 1996, Gymboree gradually tried to enrich its design line. During this period, children's clothing for different occasions was designed and produced, which was widely praised by American consumers. In 2000, Gymboree began to expand the international market, which is not only a well-known brand of early education and children's clothing, but also a form of happy growth of infants and toddlers. Gymboree began to enter the Chinese market in 2003, and gradually expanded from Shanghai to more than 140 cities across China, with a total of more than 400 Gymboree early education institutions. It can be said that Gymboree is a relatively well-known early education brand in the international market and has a certain reputation.

(2) Complete training system

In terms of the software configuration of Gymboree, because it belongs to a service type enterprise, it has also built a special training mechanism as a basic guarantee. Gymboree set up and management of various positions are very strict, after the franchisee and Gymboree reached a cooperation, the corresponding teachers and operation team need to participate in professional system training activities in Shanghai, Gymboree sent personnel to the franchise to carry out training for sales and service personnel. Shantou Golden Baby early education Center teachers are image with affinity, temper and cute and docile, like children, the teacher in the face of the baby are very quality, including in dealing with small contradictions between the baby especially decent, flexible.

(3) Complete hardware facilities

From the hardware facilities of Gymboree early education institutions, it is equipped with professional VI, SI (visual and spatial identification system), as well as special design workers, to give guidance to the decoration design of the franchise store, to a large extent, the appearance of Gymboree each franchise store is unified, and the recognition is high. In addition, the classrooms supporting the course are specially developed with Gymboree curriculum, creating themes such as forests, lakes, volcanoes, and oceans for children. Different themes of classroom design, from the perspective of children, open unlimited imagination space for children, all teaching AIDS are made of top environmental protection materials, so that parents feel more at ease.

(4) Standard management mode

Gymboree early Education institution has also built a relatively sound post responsibility mechanism, which divides the job responsibilities for different posts in detail, so that different types of workers can efficiently complete their work tasks. In addition, a targeted performance assessment mechanism has been established for different positions, and reasonable assessment standards and regulations have been set according to the characteristics of positions, so that staff can take the initiative to carry out work, and to a large extent ensure the overall work efficiency of Gymboree early education institutions. Gymboree early

Education institution has set up a fair employee promotion mechanism to fully mobilize the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of the staff. In addition, Gymboree early education institutions have also built an attendance mechanism, attaching importance to the standardization of staff etiquette, so that staff can better restrain themselves and ensure Gymboree Brand image and reputation.

2. Weaknesses of Gymboree Early Education Center

(1) The guidance and support of the headquarters for franchisees is not enough

Because the current Gymboree headquarters is more concerned about marketing, it is more inclined to occupy market share in the actual strategy implementation, which makes the franchisee increase rapidly, but because of the limitations of the headquarters in local and human resources, the training and guidance of the headquarters for franchisees is gradually reduced. For example, if the Golden Baby Early Education Center in Shantou wants to book an early education expert to give lectures, it will need to be at least two years later, and there will be early education products or professional teaching AIDS cannot be supplied in time. Due to the negative impact of many aspects, there are even cases of Gymboree franchise closures.

(2) Large employee mobility

There is no special early education specialty in China's higher education, and many employees engaged in early education are graduates of early education, most of them are non-related professionals participating in on-the-job training. Gymboree early education institutions usually invest a lot of money in staff training, and only after professional training can they be employed. Moreover, due to the rapid growth of the early education industry, many small early education institutions are reluctant to spend a lot of money on human resources training, so they will hire professional talents with high salaries.

Moreover, early education centers with strong economic strength will provide good salaries and benefits to staff, and can also attract some outstanding talents from small-scale early education centers to job-hopping. In Shantou Golden Baby early Education Center, there is also a brain drain, some are lured by small and medium-sized early education institutions with high salaries, and some job-hopped and left in pursuit of higher salaries and benefits.

(3) Single way of publicity

Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center currently uses a relatively simple publicity model, generally only through word-of-mouth publicity and community publicity to achieve the publicity goal, which is not helpful to the promotion of its own brand awareness. Although word-of-mouth publicity is the most effective mode, word-of-mouth publicity needs to go through the test of time. Only after children and parents experience early education services can a good word-of-mouth be formed, and it is generally word-of-mouth publicity between acquaintances, which is difficult to spread quickly in a short period of time, so it takes a long time. The way of community publicity has a strong pertinence, but the scope of publicity is not very large, it is difficult to quickly enhance brand awareness. Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center does not make full use of the current popular electronic marketing model, marketing activities are not carried out, especially the lack of public welfare publicity activities often carried out by Oriental baby-loving early education center; At the same time, the effectiveness of promotional activities is also mediocre, and it is not timely for consumer groups to clearly understand the new early education service products, courses and welfare activities. In the current situation of more and more fierce competition, Shantou Gymboree early education institutions still use a relatively simple publicity model, which has little impetus for its rapid development.

(4) There is no effective communication platform with parents

Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center and customers did not build a special communication channel. Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center has its own website, public account and microblog, but there are problems such as slow content update speed and few push content. Therefore, Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center needs to make full use of these network platforms, timely push some early education knowledge and course content in the process of electronic marketing, and set up a special section to communicate with customers, so that new and old customers can more truly understand the actual situation of Shantou Gymboree early education institutions. In addition, Shantou Golden Baby early Education Center has also built a special wechat group and QQ group, but in fact, the use rate is also low.

3. Opportunity at Gymboree Early Learning Center

(1) The early education industry has broad prospects for development

Due to the country's open three-child policy, the number of infants and toddlers is increasing at this stage. In addition, with the rapid development of economy at this stage, people's economic income is gradually increasing, and the corresponding educational expenditure is also gradually increasing. Relevant data show that China's urban families invest more than 10,000 yuan a year in early education. On the whole, Shantou has a good early education market, which is also the basis for the further development of Gymboree early education institutions.

(2) Policy support

In 2012, the Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan issued by China mentioned that it is necessary to strengthen the early stage of infant education in China, focus on promoting the growth of preschool education, and gradually form an early education mechanism with "wide coverage, basic protection, and multiple forms". In addition, early childhood education from 0 to 6 years old is integrated into the entire education system, giving reasonable planning, emphasizing the positive role of early education on children's intellectual development, behavioral habits, and physical and mental health growth. And also put forward that the education field should actively explore the early education development guidance mechanism in line with China's national conditions, and build a welfare system conducive to early education and infant development

4. The threat at Gymboree Early Learning Center

(1) The early education market is highly competitive

At present, according to incomplete statistics, there are more than 100 large and small early education centers in Shantou, in addition to the chain direct early education centers, such as Mei Jim and Oriental Baby Love, which are equal to Gymboree, and there are also local well-known local early education centers, as well as large and small-scale early education institutions relying on kindergartens and communities. It can be predicted that the number of early education institutions in Shantou will increase. In terms of the fierce competition in the early education market in Shantou City, the relevant early education enterprises and institutions need to develop their own advantages to gain a firm foothold in the market. Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center, although well-known, but the price is higher than many early education institutions, and the curriculum set differentiation competitive advantage is insufficient, it can be seen that it is facing great pressure. At the same time, Shantou city has emerged the trend of early education community, many communities began to set up kindergartens as the main early education center, because of low fees, close distance, familiar personnel and other reasons favored by parents, which to a certain extent also divided the early education market share.

(2) Serious homogenization of services

At present, early education institutions show a distinct homogeneity in curriculum planning. The music courses, activity courses, art courses and game courses planned by different early education institutions are very similar, and the corresponding marketing models are similar. If Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center cannot innovate the curriculum, improve the marketing concept, enhance the management efficiency, optimize the work mode, improve the service quality, it will be difficult to win a place in the competition.

(3) Lack of early education talents

China's early education industry is an emerging industry. Many investors see the benefits and development prospects of the early education industry, so they are anxious to invest when they do not understand the early education industry, which makes the current early education institutions of various sizes numerous. For the number of early education institutions, early education talents are relatively scarce, many early education examinations are only accepted after about 15 days of Montessori courses, you can get a qualification certificate, but the professional Montessori courses in the United States take more than 2 years to complete, so the quality of early education industry staff shows uneven characteristics. Moreover, China's higher education has not set up a special early education specialty, so it can only acquire professional early education knowledge and skills through on-the-job training. In addition, some early education teachers only regard their work as the behavior of making money, lack the initiative for early education, do not have enough patience and love for infants, and do not have a strong sense of responsibility. At the same time, the brain drain of early education institutions is very obvious, which makes many customers question early education centers. The lack of early education talents is also one of the hindrance factors in the development of early education institutions.

Conclusion

In this paper, the current marketing of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center is analyzed in detail, and finally, the marketing strategy plan suitable for the development of the current Gymboree Early Education Center is proposed. The main research theories of this study are as follows:

From the perspective of the environment of Shantou, due to the development of economy and the improvement of people's living standards, the development prospect of early education industry is broad, and the local government very much supports the development of private education enterprises, which is very favorable for the Shantou

Gymboree Early Education Center studied in this paper. However, because of the prosperity of the early education market, the competition in the entire market is very fierce, and many early education enterprises only value economic benefits, do not pay attention to internal improvement, resulting in the homogenization of early education services seriously lack of professional early education talents. Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center wants to stand out among many early education centers and win absolute development, it needs to give full play to its advantages and turn threats into motivation.

This paper analyzes the current marketing problems of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center from four dimensions: product dimension, consumer dimension, channel dimension and communication service process dimension, and then puts forward the future marketing strategy direction of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center from product dimension, consumer dimension, channel dimension and communication service process dimension. Finally, from the standard operation management system, excellent talent guarantee intimate service guarantee three aspects of Shantou Gymboree early education center marketing strategy guarantee measures.

1. Standardized operation management system

The implementation of enterprise marketing strategy must have corresponding safeguard measures, of course, standardized operation management system is a key part of promoting the successful realization of the marketing strategy of Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center. The standardized operation management system should be from the outside to the inside, not only to improve the current market development management, but also to improve the enrollment management system, marketing planning management. The specific realization is mainly reflected in the past work to be more detailed, responsible, to implement each job to specific employees, so as to increase the sense of responsibility of employees, so as to achieve the purpose of improving work efficiency. For example, market development management, to develop the task of the specific plan, there are long-term goals, there are short-term goals, long-term goals can be specific to the annual plan, short-term goals can be specific to the quarterly plan and monthly plan. As well as marketing planning management, there should also be specific plans, not only in the near future, but also in the long term, and it should contain detailed programs, which should reflect specific products, prices, sales methods, audiences, and detailed promotion programs. In this way, each marketer will develop a different marketing plan, which can be concentrated in the weekly meeting to communicate, or brainstorm to choose the most suitable marketing plan. The specific implementation of the marketing program can also be continuously improved according to the actual situation.

2. Excellent talent protection

Employees are the lifeblood of the enterprise and the blood that ensures the normal operation of the enterprise, so training excellent employees is the core element of the development and growth of the enterprise.

(1) Optimize staff training

It is necessary to pay attention to the training of enterprise employees, whether it is pre-job training or on-the-job employee training, self-education should be paid attention to. The main purpose of pre-job training is to make employees ready for work and understand the basic situation of the enterprise. In this way, employees can have a better understanding of the enterprise and be better qualified for future work. Therefore, the enterprise should select professional training personnel who are very familiar with the enterprise to conduct pre-job training for employees. Different aspects of training should be conducted according to the setting of different industries. At the same time, questionnaires can also be conducted on employees to find out what kind of training methods employees prefer.

For on-the-job training, in order to enable employees to further understand the new products, or to change the original service or marketing methods, such training must choose the well-known training in the industry, in the training process to understand the development of the same industry in various aspects, so as to learn from and improve the service and marketing level of the enterprise. Self-education is mainly to allow employees in the enterprise to establish a sense of self-learning. We should continue to learn at work, improve our knowledge and business level, and create a good learning atmosphere and corporate culture. To motivate employees to carry out such self-education, reasonable guidance should be carried out, and at the same time, opportunities for continuing education can be provided for employees to create space for knowledge improvement.

(2) Pay attention to employees' interests

Paying attention to the personal interests of employees can narrow the distance between enterprises and employees, and let employees gain a sense of respect, which can reduce the turnover rate of employees. Pay attention to the personal interests of employees on the one hand, we should respect the normal needs of employees, give good humanistic care, respect employees, encourage employees to actively express themselves and improve themselves. On the other hand, it is necessary to provide employees with good personal improvement space, promote and appoint excellent employees, let employees realize that they can be promoted through healthy competition, stimulate their potential, and increase their stickiness to the enterprise. Finally, the salary should be appropriately increased, and the performance appraisal should be adopted to make each employee get the corresponding remuneration according to his/her work and stimulate the enthusiasm of employees.

3. Intimate service guarantee

Early education belongs to the tertiary industry, that is, the service industry, so the intimate service guarantee in the service industry is one of the strong competitiveness of enterprises.

(1) Enhance service awareness

For enterprises in any service industry, customer satisfaction will directly affect the development of the enterprise. Therefore, all the employees of the Golden Baby early Education Center in Shantou should enhance their service awareness and try to make every customer satisfied. On the one hand, it is necessary to dig deeply into the needs of customers, and to meet the needs of customers as much as possible, to let each customer to the early education center feel that you are really for the sake of customers, to think about what customers think, worry about customers, to think about the problems that customers worry about in advance. For example, parents of early education centers will worry that their children are not adapted, and they do not want to sign up for the whole year, so they must recommend a variety of payment methods to customers, and make the refund process clear to customers to eliminate customers' doubts. On the other hand, every employee in the early education center should enhance service awareness, not only marketing and teaching staff, but also reflected in everyone and every link, such as after-sales service, patiently listening to customer complaints, seriously solving problems for customers, and using sincere attitude and intimate service to give customers satisfactory solutions.

(2) Improve service quality

The quality of service is reflected in every detail. At present, Shantou Gymboree Early Education Center has improved its service standards, which are more humanized than before. For example, there are requirements for marketing personnel's clothing, appearance, manners and greeting words. There are strict requirements for the speech and manners of the teachers, as well as the mental outlook and professional quality. In addition, Shantou Golden Baby early Education Center should also learn to continue to improve the quality of service, for example, compared with the United States Jim early education Center, the customer reception room of Golden Baby Early Education Center is not perfect enough, should increase the seat of parents, should also provide drinking water equipment, increase some seasonal fruit and fresh tea and fruit drinking services, should also increase some magazines. Truly let customers in every detail can feel the quality of service, so as to attract customers to sign up, but also may stimulate more potential customers.

The marketing strategy and implementation guarantee proposed in this research hope to provide some reference for the marketing of the Golden Baby Early Education Center in Shantou city. However, due to my limited knowledge and limited ability to collect data during the investigation, my exploration of the specific marketing strategies of other early education centers in Shantou is not perfect enough. In addition, the application and effect of the proposed marketing strategies in actual situations need to be further verified in future studies.

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Managing the Multigenerational Workforce and the Future Workplace

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Abstract

The effects of globalisation have presented numerous challenges to organisations. The rapid evolution of technology, and the arrival of technology-driven generations, has significantly shifted the way in which organisations communicate and collaborate globally. This article seeks to map out the key issues of literature on generational difference in organisations and future workplace. The article captures the distinct characteristics and behaviours exhibited by technology-driven generations (Generation Y and Generation Z) and older generations (Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X). It presents what previous research has suggested for managing different generations in organisations. Furthermore, it discusses the key considerations for creating a work environment for a multigenerational workforce in the future by highlighting the importance of technology adoption, formalising hybrid working policies, and embracing workplace diversity. Future research directions could extend the discussion of the interplay between the future workplace, the issue of generational difference, and workplace diversity. By recognising and respecting the different characteristics of each generation, organisations can leverage their strengths and successfully navigate the challenges posed by the multigenerational workforce.

Keywords: Multigenerational Workforce, Future Workplace, Generational Diversity, Diversity, Inclusion

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Introduction

Today's economy has entered a new era of industrial revolution, and the industries will be affected across the world (Aazam, Zeadally, & Harras, 2018; Soh & Connolly, 2021). With the rise of digital transformation, organisations have experienced a noticeable transformation in their work environment and nature, as digital technologies have become prevalent (Selimović, Pilav-Velić, & Krndžija, 2021). Organisations have witnessed not only shifts in work routines but also changes in workforce demographics. The number of employees of younger generations such as Gen Z is increasing, which currently contributes to the presence of five generations in the workforce (Burton, Mayhall, Cross, & Patterson, 2019).

Research shows that the younger generations, including Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z, are commonly referred to as digital natives due to their inherent proficiency for technology. These cohorts have grown up in a digital environment, where internet and digital technologies are ubiquitous, making them unfamiliar with a pre-internet era (e.g. Colbert, Yee, & George, 2016; Culp-Roche et al., 2020; Dingli & Seychell, 2015; Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; Kesharwani, 2020; Magni & Manzoni, 2020; Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Okros, 2020). These studies found that the issue of generational difference exists in organisations and they differ from previous generations in multiple ways such as behaviour, work attitudes and values, expectations, and tool preferences. Given the differences, it has become challenging for managers and colleagues from older generations in effectively collaborating and communicating with their younger employees. In response, organisations are seeking guidance from academic scholars to explore strategies and approaches for managing the complexities in a multigenerational workforce.

Organisations are facing more than the generational difference. In recent years, the outbreak of Covid-19 has forced organisations to operate work from home and hybrid working policy. This shifted how employees work; employees were required to work remotely (O Connor, Conboy, & Dennehy, 2022). Even though the government has not legislated any restrictions, several organisations have adopted hybrid working policies at this time. It also still raises questions among scholars about what the future workplace would look like and the openness and flexibility of hybrid work policy would be appropriate for work environment in the modern era. While the public and private sectors are paying close attention to this issue, there is still very little understanding on the future workplace, the multigenerational workforce, and the interplay between these two contexts.

Rationale and philosophical viewpoint underpinning this article

The underlying rationale of this article is to understand and address the challenges and opportunities presented by a multigenerational workforce in contemporary workplaces. The modern workplace is increasingly characterised by a mixture of Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z employees, Each group has unique expectations, work styles, motivations, and attitudes towards work. To effectively manage this diverse and multigenerational workforce is crucial for managers and human resource practitioners, and understanding these intergenerational dynamics in the workplace is essential for future business success. Therefore, this article aims to highlight the possible issues of intergenerational difference and provide an insight into how organisations can harness the strengths of each generation for the future workplace.

Regarding the philosophical viewpoint, the author is a qualitative researcher on information behaviour, which takes an interpretivist epistemological stance and social constructivist ontological stance. Talja, Tuominen, and Savolainen (2005) have discussed that constructivism, social constructivism or collectivism, and constructionism are emerging in the extant literature on information science. For the purpose of this article, it follows the interpretivist perspective, which posits knowledge is rooted in actual social phenomena (Scotland, 2012). This article aims to understand the experiences and perspectives of individuals and groups drawing upon previous literature on generational difference in the workplace, workplace inclusion, and the future workplace. By taking this approach, it can gain insights into how people of different generations interact with information technology in their unique ways as well as highlight how multigenerational workforce is influenced by factors and issues emerging in the extant literature and real-life phenomena.

Objectives of this article

The purposes of this paper are to 1) briefly discuss how different generations behave within organisations, 2) provide possible scenarios for organisations of what business practitioners may expect to face in the multigenerational workforce in the modern era, and 3) outline a future workplace for multigenerational workforce in organisations.

Multigenerational workforce

In today's businesses, the multigenerational workforce has been a central issue among academic scholars and practitioners. The term 'generation' is described as a group of individuals who were born around the same time, shared similar experiences, and exhibited comparable traits and attitudes as they proceeded through life together (Korn, 2010). Extensive research been studied generational difference in various domains, including work values (King, Murillo, & Lee, 2017; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010), work expectation (Magni & Manzoni, 2020; Moore, Grunberg, & Krause, 2015), technological approaches (Colbert, Yee, & George, 2016; Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; Jarrahi & Eshraghi, 2019; Nikou, Mezei, & Brännback, 2018; Okros, 2020), and education (Giray, 2022; Marrero Galván, Negrín Medina, Bernárdez-Gómez, & Portela Pruaño, 2023; Mohr & Mohr, 2017). However, the study of generations in organisations have been a highlight in the modern workforce as it is the first time in its history that five existing generations work together - Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z (Burton, Mayhall, Cross, & Patterson, 2019). In 2020, the largest proportion of the global workforce is Generation X and Generation Y (Statista, 2021). While the majority of Baby Boomers have already left the labour, due to the economic and social circumstances, the older generations are delaying their retire ment (Burton et al., 2019; Jackson, 1991). Baby Boomers still remain in charge at the highest levels of management in organisations.

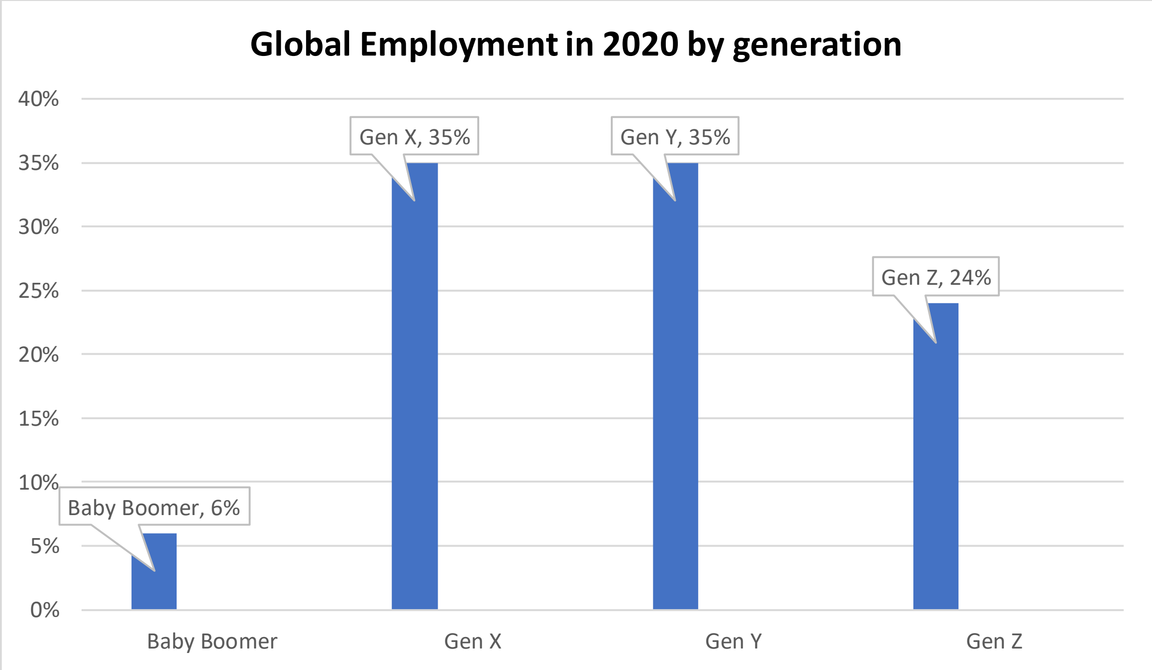

Figure 1: Global Employment in 2020 by generation. Adapted from "Global Employment by 2020, by generation", by Statista, 2021. [Online]. [Accessed 8 June 2023] Available from: https://www.statista.com/statistics/829705/global-employment-by-generation/

Organisations are collaborative by nature, which implies that working with a varied set of individuals involves communication, interaction, and collaboration. Having a mix of generations in the workplace is one of the difficulties for which organisations are seeking guidance from academic scholars (Magni & Manzoni, 2020), as different generations were born in distinguished environments, and most extant literature discovered that each generation possesses unique characteristics. Prior to the discussion of their differences, it is important to delve into the generational membership. The generational membership can be classified by birth year, yet scholars may differ the approach to birth year and how they differentiate younger and older generations based on the approach and experience to technology (Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; MacKenzie Jr & Scherer, 2019; Prensky, 2001; Tapscott, 2008).

Researchers consider younger generation to be digital natives and they were whom were born in the Generation Y or Millennials and Generation Z, while digital immigrants are used to refer to older generations – Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X. The approach to technology may be a contributing factor influences how different generations behave and interact, and younger generations (i.e. Digital natives) are considered technology-driven generations (Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020) as they were born in the digital era and were exposed to technology since their childhood (Colbert et al., 2016; Culp-Roche et al., 2020; Prensky, 2001; Vodanovich, Sundaram, & Myers, 2010).

This article refers to the age category based on (Stanton, 2017, p.60) for age classification, and divides them into two groups: technology-driven generations and older generations (Table 1). Technology-driven generations are individuals who are in the Generation Y and Generation Z, whereas older generations are Generation X, Baby Boomer and Traditionalist.

Table 1: The age classification

Technology-driven generations	Older generations
Born 1980 - 2000: *Gen Y or Millennials* Born after 2001: *Gen Z*	Born 1922 - 1943: *The Veterans, Traditionalists, or Silent Generation* Born 1943 - 1963: *The Baby Boomers* Born 1964 - 1979: *Gen X, or Gen X'ers*

Technology-driven generations VS. Older generations

Generational difference literature suggests that Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z are younger generations that are technology-driven (e.g. Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; Guo, Dobson, & Petrina, 2008; Jarrahi & Eshraghi, 2019; Prensky, 2001; Rudolph, Rauvola, Costanza, & Zacher, 2020; Vodanovich et al., 2010). The explanation for this is that their studies demonstrate that they had similar experiences environments in their childhood. They were born in an era when digital technology was available to them from an early age, and as a result of their exposure and familiarity with technology, they gained digital proficiency without having to be taught.

As opposed to their older generations (i.e. Traditionalists, Baby Boomers and Generation X'ers), their approach to technology is different from the technology-driven generations. They have lived in the world without internet and digital technology. Technology was introduced to them in their adult life, which they have less experience with using technology as they gradually learned and familiarised how to use it rather than growing in the digital environment like the younger generations.

Building on existing studies, technology-related experiences are a contributing factor of the differences between the technology-driven generations and older generations. Their behaviour has been greatly impacted by the digital environment. Compared to past generations, they have different personality attributes (Becton, Walker, & Jones□Farmer, 2014; Bencsik, Horváth-Csikós, & Juhász, 2016; Prensky, 2001; Stewart, Oliver, Cravens, & Oishi, 2017; E. Wang, Myers, & Sundaram, 2012). They are tech-savvy and seem to depend heavily on internet and digital technologies. They are precocious social networking technology users (Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020). They are familiar with technology and possess a sophisticated digital knowledge (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). For example, as young customers, they tend to accept and use mobile devices for shopping than older customers (Marriott, Williams, & Dwivedi, 2017). Technology is expected in education (Hampton, Welsh, & Wiggins, 2020). Their preference is to integrate technology in learning methods, such as simulation, videos, and gaming (Williams, 2019). Their tech-savvy behaviour also influences how organisations collaborate and communicate using new digital technologies and platforms (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Naim & Lenka, 2017; Vodanovich et al., 2010).

Due to these differences, the issue of generational gaps and technological approaches appear to be crucial factors in the modern workforce, for which organisations should focus on and be able to manage such differences. The following section will discuss extant studies on managing different generations and how the issue of generational difference manifests in organisations.

Managing technology-driven generations and older generations in organisations

Organisations are already grappling with the presence of five generations, and managing different generations in the workplace is a challenge, including strategically develop human resources strategies like recruitment, training, motivation, and payment systems (Bencsik et al., 2016). Existing research shows that not only did technology-driven generations from older generations in their digital skills and literacy, but also they share different work values, attitudes and behaviour (Becton et al., 2014; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Stewart et al., 2017; Twenge, 2010). Moreover, they demonstrate unique styles (Haynes, 2011; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011; Lyons & Schweitzer, 2017), expectations (Magni & Manzoni, 2020), and distinct patterns of digital device usage when interacting with people (Culp-Roche et al., 2020; Naim & Lenka, 2017; Widén, Ahmad, & Huvila, 2017).

When technology-driven generations are employees in organisations, they have a strong drive for achievement and assess their degree of success by the meaning of their jobs (Eisner, 2005). They have more expectations for salary, training, power, and responsibilities (Magni & Manzoni, 2020). In the study of Stewart et al. (2017), they found that younger generations (i.e.

Generation Y) have different work attitudes from their predecessors. Generation Y are not committed to an organisation through workplace culture. Their approach to technology are more likely to provoke problems within organisations. Instead of using the tools that organisations provide, they frequently choose a more convenient option, such as social media (Buasuwan, 2021). Current studies have demonstrated that employing social media has a positive impact on employee engagement (Naim & Lenka, 2017), employees' affective commitment (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019), and employee motivation (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010) among younger generations.

Growing up in a digital environment influences the younger generations to possess certain personalities and characteristics. To name a few, they are more likely to be flexible, multi-task, optimistic, self-development, team-oriented, and short attention span (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). In contrast to the older generations, they appear to be independent, able to handle one task at a time, achievement-oriented, resistant to technology, competitive, respect authority and hierarchy in the workplace, and willing to make personal sacrifices(Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). When technology-driven generations and older generations collaborate in organisations, it has created conflicts since younger generations seek to employ most recent technologies, whilst older generations appear to be against it and be lagging to adapt to technology (Autry & Berge, 2011; Shtepura, 2018; Venter, 2017; Vodanovich et al., 2010). This is because the older generations rely on face-to-face communication and over digital technologies (Venter, 2017).

It was also argued that not all older generations are against technology. They are presently learning about and adjusting to new digital trends, and they spend equivalent amount of time on social media as the younger generations (Colbert et al., 2016; Culp-Roche et al., 2020). Since the Covid-19, it has altered conventional work practices and compelled employees to adopt hybrid working (Davis et al., 2022). The circumstance likely taught many older generations how to use technology while enhancing their digital literacy, which using technology probably does not seem to be the problem for the older generations. Still, there remains a segment of older generations who are resistant towards embracing change and hold unfavourable opinions regarding technology (Buasuwan, 2021; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011; Venter, 2017; Vodanovich et al., 2010; Q. E. Wang, Myers, & Sundaram, 2013). Senior executives and business practitioners should give considerable attention to this aspect to ensure the survival of their firms, given the increasing integration of technology within the contemporary business landscape.

Apart from, technology-related experience, scholars have explored workplace inclusion and psychological safety among technology-driven generations in the workplace setting. Schroth (2019) mentioned that employees from Generation Z are more likely to be engaged and productive in a positive and inclusive work environment, and it is important that employers foster a culture of respect and diversity and set up policies against discrimination and harassment. Similarly, Rue (2018) highlights that it is essential that recruiters and educators prepare to serve the needs and expectations of this technology-drive generations as they value work-life balance, flexibility, and meaningful work. A positive and inclusive work environment is an ideal workplace for them (Rue, 2018; Schroth, 2019). In a recent study conducted by Jancourt (2020) at the University of California Berkeley and in association with national design firm, HGA's Digital Practice Group, it was also found four key factors that Gen Z employees value. Firstly, Gen Z is looking for a way to live that is both practical and sustainable, while still maintaining a connection to the natural environment. Secondly, while technology is important, Gen Z sees it as a tool that can be utilised to connect with people and solve issues, not to be replaced by technology. Thirdly, psychological safety is important to Generation Z. Lastly, they value inclusive work environments where it offers them choice, control, and proximity to the people and things that are important to them. Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, and Grigoriou (2021) suggest organisations to create a diverse, inclusive, flexible work environment as it is what Gen Z values.

One of the problems arising among different generations is that older generations are thought to have different work values, and it is important for organisations to understand the different values and priorities of each generation in order to create a workplace that is attractive and engaging for all. According to (Bennett, Pitt, & Price, 2012), they found that Traditionalists place a high value on hard work, loyalty, and stability whereas Baby Boomers value work ethic, accomplishment, and teamwork. Gen X prefers work-life balance, flexibility, and purpose, and Gen Y values diversity, inclusiveness, and social responsibility. Past studies have highlighted along the same line that the older generations are more likely to be workaholics, and work engagement than the younger generations (Bennett et al., 2012; Burton, Mayhall, Cross, & Patterson, 2019; Mahmoud et al., 2021; Stanton, 2017).

To manage these differences in organisations, researchers have suggested organisations that understanding each generation is crucial for managers and Human Resource Management to successfully oversee and manage the modern workplace (Alferjany & Alias, 2020). Each generation possesses unique attributes and proficiencies. Organisations should be able to leverage the talents inherent in each generation and assign suitable individuals to their corresponding responsibilities. Given that the technology-driven generations have digital competences and abilities, they might be allocated to work in digital positions, and organisations should explore introducing and utilising new technologies (Buasuwan, 2021). Soon the older generations are leaving the workforce (Jaqua, 2022), they possess a valuable opportunity to effectively transfer their knowledge and experience to organisations. Their extensive work experience enables them to contribute significantly towards the achievement of the organisation's objectives and goals. This not only facilitates the achievement of organisations but also paves the way for a successful succession plan, ensuring a smooth transition for future generations.

In addition, organisations that effortlessly understand, motivate, and advance technology-driven generations will be recognised as inclusive and effective members of a multigenerational workforce. This understanding enables organisations to harness the unique strengths and advantages that technology-driven generations bring to the work environment, ultimately profit from what they have to offer (Pichler, Kohli, & Granitz, 2021). Significantly, organisations should reevaluate what motivates younger generations, embrace generational diversity, and place a strong emphasis on performance evaluation in order to motivate employees and increase employee engagement and productivity (Stewart et al., 2017).

The following section will delve into the potential scenarios for the future workplace and the multigenerational workforce.

Future workplace for technology-driven generations

The nature of business is always dynamics and evolving, which can be influenced by many factors. Increasing globalisation and changing workforce dynamics have brought changes to organisations in recent years, leading organisations to adapt its business operations and policies to the constantly shifting business environment.

The existence of Millennial employees and the arrival of Gen Z are worth to delve into for the future workplace as the majority of generation in the workforce is Gen Y and Gen Z are increasingly entering workforce, and while older generations will be retiring, the rest of them will have to work with younger generations. Numerous researchers have called for academic scholars and organisations to prepare for the differences that technology-driven generations will bring to the organisations. Extant literature has discussed their differences around technology, mental health, individualism & teamwork, and diversity as all of which are presumably factors shaping technology-driven generations (Gen Y and Gen Z) (Pichler et al., 2021).

This article will touch upon three key points emerged in the discussion regarding the values demonstrated by technology-driven generations and their expectations towards the future workplace: 1) technology adoption, 2) hybrid working policy, and 3) embracing workplace diversity

Technology adoption

Undoubtedly, technology plays a significant role in modern workplace, and the majority of companies use technology, but technology is constantly evolving. The emergence of technology, such as AI, Robotics, Machine learning, has disrupted business operations and forced organisations to adopt recent technologies. Regarding the future workplace, technology will have to be one of the priorities as younger generations are tech-savvy (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Naim & Lenka, 2017; Pichler et al., 2021).

A number of researchers have found the prominent relationship between technology and younger generation (Colbert et al., 2016; Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Okros, 2020; Pichler et al., 2021). Their results show that younger generations, including Millennials and Gen Z, are technology-driven and they are proficient with using technology. They prefer to use technology and cannot live without technology. Technology is an influencing factor that determines their personality, attitudes, values, and behaviour as they were born in the digital environment (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Naim & Lenka, 2017; Pichler et al., 2021). As such, they seem to expect modern workplace to quickly adopt latest technologies. According to a PhD research, younger generations would consciously switch to newer technology as it becomes accessible and replace older technologies straight away, regardless of whether doing so means disobeying company policies (Buasuwan, 2021).

Moreover, the adoption of technology are likely to provide benefits to employees rather than harm them. By leveraging technology, organisations can create a more connected and productive workplace. Given that digital resources may be used at anytime and anywhere, a digital working environment gives employees greater freedom (Colbert et al., 2016). It supports employee collaboration (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Naim & Lenka, 2017), job satisfaction (Hanna, Kee, & Robertson, 2017), and employee engagement (Stofberg, Strasheim,

& Koekemoer, 2021). Additionally, technology helps minimise the generational gap between the younger and older generations (Jirasevijinda, 2018).

It is advised that organisations stay on top of emerging digital technologies and implement them into their business operations as soon as possible in order to establish a work environment for the multigenerational workforce in the future workplace. Furthermore, it is recommended to educate older generations on how to use new technology to improve employee performance for training and development purposes, as well as to bridge the generational divide in the workplace.

Hybrid working policy

The global pandemic Covid-19 has forced organisations to familiarise with remote work and hybrid working style. The future work place is a topic of interest among scholars, specifically for the postpandemic economy. Hybrid working is described as a system in which employees spend a portion of their time at one or more workplaces (Davis et al., 2022). It is a new phenomenon and organisations should embrace this new trend for the future workplace as it provides numerous benefits to organisations, such as increased flexibility, productivity, and employee satisfaction (Davis et al., 2022). Additionally, there is growing interest in remote work, and employees have started to request to work from home or work remotely (Smite, Christensen, Tell, & Russo, 2022). As such, this could be predicted as one of the possible trends that organisations should keep be aware of when developing the workplace of the future.

To create the future workplace for the technology-driven workforce, organisations should primarily consider formalising hybrid policy. Many organisations have enforced the hybrid policy, but most organisations still have not treated this formally (David et al., 2022). Researchers suggest that the first stage of hybrid policy can be initiated by identifying the types of which hybrid working the organisations are as it helps policymakers see a holistic view of the organisations. Then, organisational policies and guidelines could be enforced. In particular, as previously highlighted, technology adoption is critical in shaping the future workplace. It is inextricably linked to hybrid working. Digital tools and platforms are essential tools for employees when they work either remotely or at their offices. It is crucial for employers to consider facilities (i.e. technology, social media, digital tools) to serve as the main collaborative platforms for employees in physical offices and hybrid working, especially for future workplace (Selimović, Pilav-Velić, & Krndžija, 2021). Additionally, considering not all employees are tech-savvy, it should be necessary for employers to educate and train their staff on any new digital technologies that they implement. According to evidence from earlier studies, generations that are heavily influenced by technology may already be digitally fluent; yet, scholars advise companies to include technology training in their training and development package.

However, It is possible that hybrid work can cause challenges. It may lead to problems such as having to maintain communication and collaboration among individuals working across multiple places. Researchers also express concern about employee disengagement, a decrease in teamwork and a sense of belonging, and a dilution of company culture (Smite et al., 2022). For this reason, it is worth preparing for a new type of working trend that seems to be the expectation of the technology-driven generations as well as for future research directions.

Workplace diversity

Workplace diversity is not an entirely new concept. Researchers have predicted this trend over two decades (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Ever since the incident of George Floyd in 2020, it has drawn attention to the need to take steps towards positive implications in organisations (Segel, 2021). Organisations have increased their efforts to promote workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) (Barak, 2022; Nguyen, Evan, Chaudhuri, Hagen, & Williams, 2023). With a multigenerational workforce, the topic of workplace diversity and generational difference is worth studying since a number of research highlights that the coming generation is technology-driven and has different values than previous generations (e.g. Colbert et al., 2016; Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020; Jarrahi & Eshraghi, 2019; Kesharwani, 2020; Lyons & Schweitzer, 2017; Okros, 2020; Widén et al., 2017)

As referred by Morukian (2022), workplace diversity is described as differences in characteristics of member identity groups regarding the following:

Race, skin colour, ethnicity, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability or disability, socioeconomic background, academic background, profession, family and relationship status, language, habits and activities, and personality traits (Morukian, 2022, p. 9).

It is the different attributes and values of which employees may bring to organisations. Being able to recognise, comprehend, accept, and respect the diversity among employees is what the manager should do and value their differences (Agbontaen, 2019). Studies also show that embracing workplace diversity provides positive impacts (e.g. Acquavita, Pittman, Gibbons, & Castellanos-Brown, 2009; Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Ely & Thomas, 1996; Mor

Barak et al., 2016; Saxena, 2014). Diversity climate is associated with employee behaviours such as a tendency of turnover and employee performance (Lauring & Selmer, 2012; McKay et al., 2007; Singh, Winkel, & Selvarajan, 2013). Mor Barak (2016) states that workforce diversity has been shown to strengthen organisational processes while offering businesses a competitive advantage in key areas such as recruiting high potential employees, cultivating innovation and creativity, and establishing an excellent track record in the community. Diversity also has a positive impact on organisational commitment (Giffords, 2009), job satisfaction (Acquavita et al., 2009), organisational performance (Richard, Barnett, Dwyer, & Chadwick, 2004; Sacco & Schmitt, 2005). Early researchers have drawn on the social identity theory to explore diversity in the workplace (Roberson, 2019) as social identify theory proposes that people are influenced and shaped by what groups they belong to (Tajfel, 1978). This indicates that different groups of individuals, such as different generations in organisations, might view diversity differently. In modern workplace, studies suggest that diversity is valued more by younger generations than by older generations, especially Gen Z, and this implies that Gen Z is prone to work for organisations that value diversity (Pichler et al., 2021). If Gen Z makes up the majority of the workforce of the future, creating a diverse and inclusive workplace may become a trend worth keeping an eye for, and organisations are advised to prepare to support such movements.

Even though it might be challenging for certain organisations that work culture is deeply ingrained and resistant to change, employers are obligated to acknowledge that this will be the future reality. To create a work environment for technology-driven generations, Pichler et al. (2021) suggest that Gen Z employees desire an environment at work that is encouraging, collaborative, and inclusive. Gen Z employees may feel valued and appreciated by fostering a positive atmosphere at work. This should be a reminder for organisations to focus on creating a sense of inclusion and belonging among employees (Chen & Tang, 2018). Employees from different backgrounds' feelings of inclusion have a direct influence on how committed they are to the company and how satisfied they are at work; therefore, creating a culture where the distinctive characteristics that each employee brings to the company are recognised and respected, making it an inclusive workplace, which, in turn, makes it an ideal environment for younger generations (Mor Barak, 2015).

Future research directions

This article suggests future research to investigate many aspects influencing the work environment and workplace in the future. In the study of Singh et al. (2013), they found a deeper understanding of the interplay between psychological safety, diversity climate, and employee performance, with a specific focus on minority groups, can offer valuable insights for designing future work environments that promote productivity, well-being, and inclusivity. Future research should extend the study of technology-driven generations and exploring the role of diversity management in creating such an inclusive environment. It should also delve into organisational policies and approaches for future workplace such as hybrid policy in the multigenerational workforce setting. Past research has discussed the differences of generations in how they use technology (Culp-Roche et al., 2020; Ghobadi & Mathiassen, 2020), collaborate (Naim & Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2019; Naim & Lenka, 2017), their differences in work values and expectation (Magni & Manzoni, 2020; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010), but there is a lack of research that focuses on the future workplace for the technology-driven generations. Additionally, future research could extend the investigation of the underlying mechanisms through which diversity influences individual, group, and organisational outcomes (Roberson, 2019).

Conclusion

This article has addressed the importance of understanding and managing the multigenerational workforce in the modern era, with a specific focus on the differences of technology-driven generations and older generations. It has highlighted the differences between these generations, particularly in terms of their technological approaches, work values, attitudes, and behaviours. Managing different generations is crucial for organisations to create an inclusive and effective work environment.

To effectively manage the multigenerational workforce, organisations should consider leveraging the unique strengths and abilities of each generation. Technology-driven generations (i.e. Millennials and Generation Z) bring digital proficiency and a strong drive for achievement. They expect organisations to adopt the latest technologies and provide a digital working environment. On the other hand, older generations possess valuable experience and knowledge that can be transferred to younger generations. Organisations should provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and succession planning (Buasuwan, 2021; Burton et al., 2019).

This article also discussed what workplace will be and what can be expected in the future. Key considerations for the future workplace include technology adoption, hybrid working policies, and embracing workplace diversity. Younger generations are tech-savvy, and they demand company tools to be recent technologies and convenient. Organisations are advised to stay updated with evolving digital technologies and adopt them into their business practices. Formalising hybrid working policies is an initial step in creating the future workplace in the modern era. It can provide flexibility and enhance employee satisfaction (Davis et al., 2022) since the change in demographics and workforce as well as the postpandemic economy. Additionally, organisations should prioritise workplace diversity and create an inclusive culture. In order to create a workplace that accommodates diversity and embrace the unique characteristics and perspectives of each generation, organisations can create a supportive and inclusive work environment that fosters productivity, engagement, and success (Pichler et al., 2021; Mor Barak et al., 2016).

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